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POLITICAL PAPERS,

CHIEFLY RESPECTING THE

ATTEMPT OF THE COUNTY OF YORK,

AND OTHER

CONSIDERABLE DISTRICTS,

COMMENCED IN 1779, AND CONTINUED DURING SEVERAL
SUBSEQUENT YEARS, TO EFFECT A

REFORMATION

OF THE

PARLIAMENT OF GREAT-BRITAIN:

COLLECTED BY THE

Rev. CHRISTOPHER WYVILL, *K*

CHAIRMAN OF THE LATE COMMITTEE OF ASSOCIATION
OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.

VOLUME I.

YORK:

PRINTED BY W. BLANCHARD:

SOLD BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON,
AND J. TODD, YORK.

POLITICAL PAPERS,

CHIEFLY RELATING TO

ATTENDANCE OF THE COUNTY OF YORK,

AND OTHER

CONSIDERABLE DISTRICTS.

COMMENCED IN 1790, AND CONTINUED DURING SEVERAL
SUCCESSIVE YEARS, TO PRESENT

REFORMATION

OF THE

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REV. CHRIS. WYVILL,

CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.



VOLUME I.

YORK:

PRINTED BY W. BARNARD,

AT THE SIGN OF THE WHITE HORSE, IN THE MARKET, LONDON.

AND J. TAYLOR, 1801.

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PREFACE

P R E F A C E

TO THE

THREE FIRST VOLUMES.

THE Collection of Political Papers now offered to the Public contains a transcript from the Books of the Yorkshire Committee of every material Resolution passed by that Body of Men, and by their Sub-Committee, from the appointment of the Committee at a General Meeting of the County of York, in the year 1779, to the close of its labours in 1784; also, a similar transcript from the Minutes of the Proceedings of the First and Second Meeting of Deputies, in the years 1780 and 1781; also, Accounts of the Resolutions and Debates at several Meetings of the County of York and other Counties, the Metropolis and other Cities, &c. in the year 1779, and the six subsequent years, republished.

A

republished from Accounts published at the time by authority from those Meetings; also, Letters and other Pieces selected from the Correspondence of the Yorkshire Committee. With these Papers, are connected several Addresses, &c. published by the Constitutional Society in London, Accounts of several Debates in Parliament on the proposed Reform of the Representation of the People, and some other Papers relative to that subject.

To these pieces are prefixed some Preliminary Papers respecting the Association proposed at a Meeting of the County of York, in the year 1745, by that truly venerable Clergyman, Thomas Herring, Archbishop of York; also, Papers respecting the Proceedings of two Meetings of the same County, in the years 1768 and 1769, held in opposition to the power which the House of Commons had then lately assumed, by their mere vote to incapacitate from sitting in that House, John Wilkes, Esq; a Gentleman legally qualified and regularly elected by the Freeholders of Middlesex to Represent them in Parliament, and to place in his seat another person for whom a minority
of

of votes had been given ; with an Account by John Wilkes, Esq; of the renunciation of that illegally assumed power by the House of Commons, in the year 1782.— These Papers are contained in two Volumes, forming the first, and in size, if not in every other sense, the most considerable part of the present Publication:

The Third Volume contains the Editor's Correspondence with the Committees of Edinburgh and Stirling, in the years 1783 and 1784, with several Papers received from the Committee of Edinburgh respecting the better regulation of Elections in the Royal Burghs of Scotland ; also, the Resolutions of several Meetings held in London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, in the years 1788 and 1792, for the purpose of promoting improvements in the Elections of the Counties and Royal Burghs of Scotland, and a general Reformation of the Parliament of Great-Britain ; also, the Editor's Correspondence with the Volunteers of Ireland, in the year 1783 ; his Correspondence with many private Gentlemen of Yorkshire and several Members of Parliament, in the year 1779, previous to the Meeting of the County of York in

that year; and his Correspondence with Sir G. Savile, the Earl of Shelburne, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, and other respectable Persons on subjects connected with the proposed Reformation of Parliament: to which are added, in an Appendix, The Editor's Defence of Dr. Price, and the Reformers of England: His Letter to the Right Hon. William Pitt, in the year 1793: and an Account of the Proceedings and other Papers of the Society of the Friends of the People, in the year 1792, &c. These Papers, the last excepted, being a portion of the Editor's separate Correspondence, and of his Publications as a private unauthorised Individual, form a moiety of the Second Part of the intended Collection; to complete it, the Editor's Correspondence with the Right Hon. William Pitt, and several other Persons, will be published at a future period, and with other Papers will be comprised in the Fourth and last Volume.

For the sake of distinctness, the Papers in the three first Volumes have been distributed in Numbers, which connect, in separate bundles, the Editor's Correspondence with the same Individuals on various

rious subjects, or with different Individuals on the same or nearly the same subject, and as much as possible they unite pieces published at different times by the Yorkshire Committee, in the course of their long and, in some degree, successful struggle, with Papers published about the same time by other Public Meetings on the same necessary business of Parliamentary Reformation.

In the Account of the Debate at a Meeting of the County of York, in the year 1779, which is given at page the 9th of the First Volume, the Speech of Mr. Smelt at page 13, has been copied from an Anonymous Pamphlet, * which appeared soon after that Meeting. The authority of this Publication has been preferred to that of Mr. Smelt himself, (by whom his Speech with material variations was published some months after the appearance of the Pamphlet alluded to) for the following reasons, viz.

1. In the Preface to Mr. Smelt's Edition of his Speech, that Gentleman disclaims

* The title of this Pamphlet is, The Speech of Leonard Smelt, Esq; delivered by him at the Meeting of the County of York, December the 30th, 1779, with Notes variorum.

any pretension to great exactness of memory, *with regard to words*, and professes only to lay before his Readers the *sentiments themselves*; with regard to which he thinks he cannot be subject to mistake, and he trusts, "that those who heard him at York will find the substance and full meaning of what he endeavoured to express at that Meeting."

2. In an Advertisement prefixed to the Anonymous Pamphlet, it is indeed acknowledged, "that the Speech of Mr. Smelt was not taken down in short-hand; it is not therefore pretended by the Anonymous Editor, that it is a faithful copy of every identical word that was delivered by Mr. Smelt, but it was put together from the notes taken by several Gentlemen present; and the Editor, who can himself boast a tolerably good memory, consulted other persons then present, concerning the arrangement of its parts, &c. and therefore it is presumed, that the Public will rely upon its authenticity till its inaccuracy shall be proved by another Edition so authenticated."

3. The passages which are found in the Anonymous Edition of the Speech, but
which

which have been omitted in Mr. Smelt's Edition, and therefore may be thought liable to dispute, contain some very remarkable expressions; the words alluded to had given offence at the Meeting; they were found in the different notes which the Anonymous Editor had an opportunity to compare, and they were published in his Pamphlet, while they were yet fresh in the recollection of many persons present, who confirmed in that respect the accuracy of the Publication.

4. In the replies to Mr. Smelt's Speech there are several direct allusions to the remarkable expressions, omitted by Mr. Smelt himself, but retained by the Anonymous Editor of his Speech.

5. The Editor of this Collection heard the Speech of Mr. Smelt; he listened to it with attention; when the Anonymous Edition of it appeared, he thought it an accurate transcript of the Speech, and particularly recollected that he had heard Mr. Smelt speak the remarkable words alluded to; and since that time he never has found cause to alter his opinion, or entertain any doubt upon the subject. For this and the preceding reasons, it seems consonant with

truth and justice in giving a Copy of Mr. Smelt's Speech to prefer the Anonymous Edition to his own; and particularly to retain the remarkable expressions in question, though Mr. Smelt possibly from inadvertence or forgetfulness, possibly from motives of prudence, has omitted them.

When the 7th Paper of the 11th Number at page 216 of the Second Volume was sent to the press, the endeavours of the Editor to obtain a Copy of the Petition for a Reform in the Representation of the People, agreed to by the Freeholders of Cornwall early in the year 1783, had not been successful. But since that Paper was printed a worthy Member of the House of Commons at the request of the Editor and a learned Friend, in Cornwall, has had the goodness to search the Journals of the House of Commons for the Petition in question; by him it was found in those Journals and ascertained to be, *mutatis mutandis*, a Copy of the Petition of the County of York, on the 19th of December, 1782. From the numerous Boroughs in Cornwall, that County derives an extraordinary share of importance in the National Representation. But the frauds and corruptions

corruptions of the Borough-Elections were placed immediately under the eyes of the Cornish Gentlemen, they saw the ignominy of this disgraceful Representation; they felt the dangers which at that time threatened to over-whelm the Nation; they traced these evils to their genuine cause the nearly-ruined state of the popular branch of the Constitution; and with the Counties of Kent, York, Middlesex, and other great Communities, the County of Cornwall concurred in a Petition whose tendency certainly was to destroy abuses advantageous to the local interests of that District, but injurious to the general welfare of their Country. This was an effort of public spirit which the Editor wished to authenticate; and he feels himself sensibly indebted to both his Cornish Friends who have thus enabled him to record it here.

The Meeting at the Thatched House Tavern, on the 18th of May, in the year 1782, appears to have excited a considerable degree of attention, and the Resolutions then agreed to, have been frequently quoted in some late Debates in the House of Commons. The Editor thinks it proper therefore

therefore to declare, that the Meeting in question was called chiefly at his desire; that Sir W. Plomer, then Lord Mayor of London presided at it; that the Duke of Richmond and the Right Hon. William Pitt were present; that the Resolutions agreed to by the Meeting were originally drawn by the Editor, not exactly as they now stand at page 424 of the First Volume; that they were thought to need some correction, and having received an amendment from the Editor, were shown by him in their amended state to Mr. Pitt, and as the Editor believes, to the Duke of Richmond, by whom they were approved in that state, and then offered to the Meeting, by which they were unanimously adopted.

The Editor is concerned to find that these Resolutions have been reprinted in the Appendix to the Third Volume among the Proceedings of the Society of Friends of the People. This repetition, of which he was not aware in time, the Reader is requested to excuse, and to correct many typographical errors not noticed or not corrected by the Editor.

C. WYVILL,

POSTSCRIPT

PREFACE

TO THE THREE FIRST VOLUMES.

THE County Meetings at York, on the 30th of Dec. 1779, and 28th of March, 1780, having produced very considerable and very beneficial effects, it may be some gratification to the curiosity of the Reader to add a few particulars respecting those Meetings, which it was at first thought unnecessary to insert in their proper place, in the first and fourth Numbers of this Collection. In the afternoon of the 29th of December, 1779, many Gentlemen were assembled at the York Tavern; at whose desire, Mr. Wyvill opened the business in a short Speech, and read to them the Petition which had been previously seen and approved

approved by his Friends at Leven Grove, Giffborough, the Plantation, Sedbury, Rokeby, &c. and after the Petition another Paper, * in the form of a Declaration or Representation, written in a strain of dignified expostulation on the distressful State of the Country, but pointing at no specific measure of Reformation, and submitting no prayer to the wisdom of Parliament. For this reason, probably, the Petition was preferred by the previous Meeting, and was referred to the consideration of a Committee, consisting of the following Gentlemen, viz. Henry Duncombe, Esq; the Rev. William Mason, Samuel Tooker, Esq; Thomas Hill, Esq; John Smith of Heath, Esq; Lieutenant-General John Hale, and the Rev. C. Wyvill; by whom it was approved, and reported to the adjourned previous Meeting in the evening, without alteration, except by the insertion of a few material words, on the suggestion of Mr. Hill, viz. "Whence the Crown has acquired a great and unconstitutional influence, which if not checked, may soon prove fatal to the Liberties of this Country."

* The Author was understood to be John Lee, Esq; afterwards Attorney-General in Lord Rockingham's Administration.

The Petition improved by the addition of this clause was read by Mr. Wyvill to the adjourned previous Meeting, which was become very numerous; the approbation it met with was now more strong and decisive than before; this approbation was forcibly expressed by many voices; but Sir Thomas Frankland, in a short Speech of mixed approbation and despondence expressed his opinion of the fate the Petition was likely to meet with, in a peculiar style, which threw the Meeting into convulsions of laughter. To Sir Thomas Frankland, Mr. Wyvill replied in a tone of gravity and earnestness, that the Petition might indeed be treated with contempt by Parliament, as the Honourable Baronet had suggested, if no support were prepared to be given; but that the means of a continued and effectual support might be found, not in measures of violence as some persons might conceive he meant, but in an Association consistent with Law, and the principles of the Constitution. On which he put the question, that the Petition now read be offered to the County Meeting to-morrow for their approbation; in favour of which every hand in the room

room appeared to be held up ; but wishing to ascertain the sense of the previous Meeting more exactly, Mr. Wyvill desired, that if a single Gentleman then present disapproved the Petition, he would hold up his hand and state his objection ; no objection being stated, and no hand being held up against the measure, he cried out, with animation, *Then there is a Hope for England* ; and the previous Meeting was immediately closed. The Petition on the following day, viz. December 30, 1779, was approved by the Freeholders of the County of York, and was adopted with uncommon zeal, by many Counties, Cities, and Towns, apparently forming a great majority of the Kingdom.

At the Second Meeting of the County of York, on the 28th of March, 1780, the object proposed, was to form an Association for effecting a Reform of Parliament, by procuring more frequent Elections, and a more adequate Representation of the People. But the Peers who had approved the economical Petition of the First Meeting, were not prepared to accede to the intended measure of the Second. Of that respectable Body, the Earl of Effingham alone attended

attended the Second Meeting, and even his concurrence in the Association was for a short time withheld, with the laudable view, and in the hope, to prevail upon Lord Rockingham and his Noble Friends to join with him in that measure.

The absence of the Lords alluded to, was a sufficiently plain intimation to the popular Agents, that the assistance of the Great Whig Aristocracy in any more effectual Reform than that held out in the economical Petition, was not then to be expected. But though disappointed, the Yorkshire Gentlemen were not discouraged by the defection of their Noble Friends.— Among the Gentlemen who attended this Meeting many were attached to Lord Rockingham and the other Peers, by long habits of intimacy and personal friendship, or the general similarity of their political sentiments. Yet neither the absence of those Noble Lords, nor the dissuasive arguments pressed with much emotion by Mr. Stanhope, nor the more direct opposition of Lord John Cavendish, whose integrity and Roman firmness of character added weight to the hereditary claims of his Family to public respect, nor even the

the hesitation of Sir George Savile himself, in whose wisdom and virtue the most unlimited confidence on any other occasion would have been placed, could shake the resolution of the Assembly: They were convinced, that Parliament was corrupted; that frequent Elections and a Reformed Representation could alone purify Parliament from corruption; and that without an effectual Reformation in these respects, the Liberties of the Nation could not be safe; after a long and animated Debate, this general sentiment prevailed over every habitual tie of personal regard, or party attachment, over every exertion of great abilities, supported by the most unquestioned purity of character. For this effort of Patriotism, the Yorkshire Gentlemen were not unblamed at the time. Afterwards when they had entered into the strict engagements of an Association, with the terms of which Lord John Cavendish could not comply, they found themselves at the General Election, in the same year, under the hard necessity to oppose his Re-election. For their conduct on this occasion, they have been censured with much

much severity by men * who seem not to have reached a conception of the generous motives which actuated them, in thus preferring fidelity to their engagement, and their duty to the Public to every earthly consideration. It is certain that the Yorkshire Committee anxiously wished for the concurrence of their Noble Friends, and endeavoured to obtain it by every means of concession and conciliation, which was in their opinion consistent with those superior considerations. One of their most remarkable concessions, was immediately previous to the County Meeting, on the 28th of March, 1780. At that time the Yorkshire Gentlemen were resolved not to abandon their Plan of a radical Reform of Parliament; but to a Modification of it, they willingly consented, with views and for reasons which unprejudiced men will probably approve.—At a previous Meeting they were deliberating on the terms of their proposed Association; and on the point of adopting Annual Parliaments, as one of its Articles. This was the measure recommended by the Meeting of Deputies, which had been recently held for the purpose of uniting the Petitioning Bodies in

* By Sir Brook Boothby and others.

one uniform Association ; and the recommendation appeared to meet the wishes of the Committee. At this moment a worthy Member of the Committee, Stephen Croft, senior, Esq; produced a letter from Lord Rockingham, expressing his opinion, that Triennial Parliaments would be preferable to Annual ; and promising that if adopted by the Committee, the measure would be supported by his Lordship and his Friends. On a prospect thus fair of obtaining that assistance by which a moderate Reform of Parliament might be effected, and the hazards to which it was foreseen a refusal would expose the Nation, might be avoided, the Yorkshire Gentlemen consented to the proposed Modification ; but their consent did not produce the desired effect ; Lord Rockingham, it was soon found had answered for more than he was able to effect, and his powerful Friends disavowed their having previously authorized such an engagement.— Hence jealousies arose, which may well seem justifiable in the Committee ; those jealousies, during the life of Lord Rockingham did not break out into an open breach ; that was prevented by the mildness and moderation of that virtuous Nobleman,

bleman, by the 'prudent and conciliatory temper of the Committee, and by the good offices of their common Friend, Sir G. Savile. After the untimely loss of Lord Rockingham, and the death of that incomparable Patriot, it was evident that an appearance of union between that respectable Body and the Noble Lords with whom they had been connected at first, no longer could be preserved, nor in such circumstances was it desired by the Committee. Yet have they ever been ready to acknowledge with gratitude, that during the short Administration in which Lord Rockingham took the lead, in 1782, he and his Noble Friends performed with zeal and fidelity their promise to the Public, and even performed more than they stood pledged to fulfil.

The Editor for himself begs leave to add, that on the occasions alluded to, he approved the conduct of the Committee; he thought, he felt, and he acted as they did; and with them he chearfully abides the judgement of the Public.

C. WYVILL,

BURTON-HALL,

May 26, 1794.

PRELIMINARY PAPERS.

NUMBER I.

Paper I.

ADVERTISEMENT,

*Calling a Meeting of the Nobility, Gentlemen,
and Clergy of the County of York, on the 22th
of September, 1745.*

WHEREAS a most wicked and unnatural
Rebellion against our Sovereign Lord
King GEORGE and his Government is actually
begun and has made some progress in Scotland;
and whereas there are undoubted evidences
that it will soon be supported by the common
and united enemies of Great-Britain, the Crowns
of France and Spain,—actual preparations and
embarkations being made for that purpose in
several ports of their kingdom; and whereas
this County of York will probably be soon and
most nearly affected by the progress of this Re-
bellion:—

bellion :—A General Meeting of the several Nobility, Gentlemen, and Clergy in the three several Ridings of this County is desired to be at the Castle of York, on Tuesday the 24th of this instant September, in order to consult of such measures as may be thought necessary for the support of the King and Government, and for the immediate defence of this County in particular, at a time when the very being of our Constitution, and the security of our Liberty and Property, and Religion, is in the most apparent and imminent danger.

SEPTEMBER 11, 1745.

THO. EBOR,
MALTON,
IRWIN,

In the absence of the
Lord Lieutenant of
the North-Riding,

CONYERS D'ARCY,
JOHN HUTTON,
THO. METCALF.

Paper II.

Paper II.

Speech made by his Grace the Lord Archbishop of York, at presenting an Association entered into at a Meeting of the Nobility, Gentlemen, and Clergy of the County of York, at the Castle of York, on the 24th of September, 1745.

My LORDS,

GENTLEMEN,

My Reverend Brethren of the CLERGY,

I AM desired by the Lords Lieutenants of the several Ridings, to open to you the reasons of our present assembling; and as the advertisement which has called us together is in every body's hands, and the fact now speaks itself too plainly, a few words will be sufficient on the occasion.

It was some time before it was believed, (I would to God it had gained credit sooner) but now every child knows it, that the Pretender's Son is in Scotland; has set up his standard there; has gathered and disciplined an army of great

great force; receives daily increase of numbers; is in possession of the capital City there; has defeated a small part of the King's forces; and is advancing with hasty steps towards England.

What will be the issue of this rapid progress must be left to the Providence of God. However what is incumbent upon us to do, is to make the best provision we can against it; and every Gentleman, I dare say every Man in England, will think it his wisdom and his interest to guard against the mischievous attempts of these wild and desperate Russians.

But the great mischief to be feared, which ought to alarm us exceedingly, and put us immediately on our defence, which every day opens more and more, is that these commotions in the North are but part of a great plan concerted for our ruin.

They have begun under the countenance, and will be supported by the forces of France and Spain, our old and inveterate, (and late experience calls upon me to add, our savage and blood thirsty) enemies. A circumstance that should fire the indignation of every honest Englishman. If these designs should succeed, and Popery and Arbitrary Power come in upon us, under the influence and direction of these two tyrannical and corrupted Courts, I leave you to reflect, what would become of every thing that is valuable to us.

We

We are now blessed with the mild administration of a just and Protestant King, who is of so strict an adherence to the Laws of our Country, that not an instance can be pointed out, during his whole reign, wherein he made the least attempt upon the Liberty, or Property, or Religion, of a single person. But, if the ambition and pride of France and Spain is to dictate to us, we must submit to a Man to govern us under their hated and accursed influence, who brings his Religion from Rome, and the rules and maxims of his Government from Paris and Madrid.

For God's sake, Gentlemen, let us consider this matter as becomes us, and let no time be lost to guard against this prodigious ruin. To your immortal honour be it spoken, you have considered it; and are now met together to call in the unanimous consent and assistance of this great County. This County, as it exceeds every other for its extent and riches, so it very naturally takes the lead of the inferior ones. And it will be extremely to our credit; give courage to the friends of the best Constitution in the World; damp the spirit of its enemies at home, (if any such can be conceived in Britain at this dangerous crisis) and be an instruction to those abroad; that there is still spirit and honesty enough among us to stand up in defence of our common Country. This will be the use of an unanimous

and hearty declaration of fidelity to our Country, and Loyalty to our King. But the times, Gentlemen, call for something more than this, something must be done as well as said. And the fund for our defence, already begun and now to be proposed to this great Assembly, will, it is hoped, from reasons of public example and public safety, meet with the hearty concurrence of every individual that composes it. And at the same time, that your hearts go along with the Association your hands will be open to support the necessary measures of self-defence.

As to you, my Reverend Brethren, I have not long had the honour to preside among you; but from the experience I have had, and what I have always heard of your honest love to your Country, (if you permit me to say so) I will be your security to the public, that you will decline no pains to instruct and animate your people, nor expence according to your circumstances, to stand up against Popery and Arbitrary Power, under a French or Spanish Government. We scorn the Policies of the Court of Rome; have no interests separate from the People; but, on every occasion where our Country is concerned, look upon ourselves as incorporated with the warmest defenders of it; or, if we do desire to be distinguished, it will be by our ardor and zeal to preserve our happy Constitution.

Let

Let us unite then, Gentlemen, as one Man, to stop this dangerous Mischief, from which union no Man surely can withdraw, or withhold his assistance, who is not lifted into the wicked service of a French or a Spanish Invasion, or wholly unconcerned for the fate of his bleeding Country.

May the Great God of Battles stretch out his all-powerful hand to defend us; inspire an union of hearts and hands among all ranks of People; a clear wisdom into the Councils of his Majesty; and a steady courage and resolution into the hearts of his Generals.

Others of the County of York at a general meeting, held at the Castle of York, the 24th day of September, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty-five.

May it please your Majesty,

I do accept from your Majesty's subjects of the County of York, the Association entered into this day with a small number of your Majesty's subjects of their shires to your Majesty's sacred Person, and to your Majesty's family. If the Rebels in Scotland should come time to make its progress this way, our arms shall make good our words; and we are determined, under the blessing of God, and with the assistance of your Majesty and our own Paper III. and Liver to stand up in defence of our Religion.

Paper III.

Address to the King agreed to at a Meeting of the Nobility, Gentlemen, and Clergy, of the County of York, on the 24th of September, 1745.—With the ASSOCIATION annexed.

To the King's most excellent Majesty,
THE humble Address of the Lord Archbishop of York, Lords Lieutenants, Nobility, Deputy Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, Clergy, Gentlemen, Freeholders, and others of the County of York, at a general Meeting, held at the Castle of York, the 24th day of September, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty-five,

May it please your Majesty,

To accept from your faithful subjects of the County of York, the Association, entered into this day with a most unanimous concurrence, as a Testimony of their affection to your Majesty's sacred Person, and to your Royal Family, If the Rebellion in Scotland should continue to make its progress this way, our actions shall make good our words; and we are determined, under the blessing of God, and with the assistance of your Majesty, to use our utmost efforts, and at the hazard of our Estates and Lives, to stand up in defence of our Religion

ligion and our Country, and the preservation of your Majesty.

God grant your Majesty a long and happy Reign over us, and that the days of it which are to come, may be as full of peace, as those which are past have been distinguished, (with the sincerest thanks and gratitude we declare it) by the mildest and most just administration in the World.

THE ASSOCIATION.

Whereas there is now a horrid and unnatural Rebellion, formed and carried on in Scotland by Papists, and other wicked and traiterous persons, countenanced and supported by the old and inveterate Enemies of our Country, and the Religion and Liberties thereof, the Crowns of France and Spain, in order to dethrone his present Majesty King George, the only rightful and lawful King of these Realms: and having subverted our Religion, Laws, and Liberties, (which God forbid) to set upon the Throne a Popish Pretender, a dependant and a slave to those tyrannous and corrupted Courts,

We the Lord Archbishop of York, Lords Lieutenants, Nobility, Deputy Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, Clergy, Gentlemen, Freeholders, and others, of the County of York, whose names are subscribed to this writing,

writing, and every of us, being of opinion that in times so full of dangers and treasonable practises as these are, an union of our hearts and forces, will be most conducing to his Majesty's safety and the public good of our Country, do voluntarily and willingly bind ourselves, every one of us to the other, jointly and severally, in the band of one firm and loyal Society, and do hereby promise, that with our whole Powers, Bodies, Lives and Estates, we and every of us will stand by and assist each other, in the support and defence of his Majesty's sacred Person and Government; and will withstand, offend, and pursue, as well by force of arms as by all other means, the said Popish Pretender and Traitors, and also all manner of persons, of what state soever they be, and their abettors, that shall attempt, act, council, or consent, to any thing that shall tend to the harm of his Majesty King George, or of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, or any of their issue, or to the subversion of his Majesty's Government. And we do by this instrument declare, that none of us shall, for any respect of persons or causes, or for fear or reward, separate ourselves from this Association, or fail in the prosecution thereof during our lives.

Dated at the Castle of York, the Twenty-fourth day of September, in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty-five.

PRELIMINARY

PRELIMINARY PAPERS.

NUMBER II.

Paper I.

Letter sent by the High Sheriff and Grand Jury of the County of York, at the Summer Assizes, 1769, to their Representatives in Parliament, with their Answer annexed.

WE the High Sheriff and Grand Jury of the County of York, have with serious attention considered your conduct on the late decisions touching the Freeholders Right of Election, and are happy to find it consistent with the uniform constitutional zeal by which you have hitherto on every crisis been actuated. You have always in your Parliamentary Characters, supported the power of Election in your Electors, and thereby vindicated their Liberties

as inseparable from your own ; and have supported that connection of interest between the Representative Body and the Freeholders, on which our most happy Constitution chiefly depends. You, Gentlemen, think the gratitude of your Countrymen the best reward of your actions ; that gratitude will ever be attended with the approbation of the best of Kings ; and we desire to express to you our warmest and most affectionate thanks for the conduct by which you have deserved it.

*Answer by Sir George Savile and Edwin Lascelles,
Esq; to the preceding Letter.*

To the HIGH SHERIFF and GRAND JURY of the
County of York,

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR approbation of our conduct in the late very essential question, regarding the Rights of the Electors of this Kingdom, gives us, assure yourselves, the greatest satisfaction, and very much overpays us for the simple performance of that first duty, which we should have thought it criminal in the highest degree to have neglected.

It

It would be very strange indeed, if, intrusted as we are by our Constituents with the care and guardianship of all their Rights, we could have been careless of that great, original, and fundamental one, on which all the others are dependent—The Right of Free Election, and true Representation.

Be assured, Gentlemen, that as long as we have the honour to hold the important trust committed to us by the Freeholders of Yorkshire, we never will cease to withstand every measure that tends to substitute any Right of Election upon earth, or any Set of Electors, to those which the Constitution has established: Nor can we surely be so regardless of the honour of our own office, as willingly to hold it by any other tenure in the world, than that of the free choice of our Electors.

We are, Gentlemen,
With the most perfect respect and regard,
Your most obliged and
most obedient humble servants,
G. SAVILE,
EDWIN LASCELLES.

Paper II.

*Letter sent by a Meeting of the Citizens of York,
to their Representatives in Parliament, signed by
near 500 Freemen; with the Answer annexed.*

York, August 15, 1769.

WE, Freemen of this ancient City, this day assembled, truly sensible of the obligations we are under to you, Lord John Cavendish, and you, Mr. Charles Turner, for your unbiassed conduct in Parliament, and steady resolutions and endeavours to support the known ancient freedom of the English Constitution, most cordially unite in our sincerest thanks, assuring you, Gentlemen, that such principles will ever secure to you the hearts and affections of all those who have the honour to subscribe themselves

Your most obliged humble servants,
and fellow-citizens.

Answer

*Answer by Lord John Cavendish and Charles
Turner, Esq; to the preceding Letter.*

YORK, August 26, 1769.

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR thanks for our Parliamentary conduct expressed in a manner so obliging and flattering to us, is an honour far above our deserts, as the utmost merit we could possibly claim, would amount to no more than a bare discharge of the duty we owe our Constituents.—We feel ourselves extremely happy that in the free exercise of our own judgments, we have acted in a manner agreeable to your sentiments.—The mutual confidence of the People and their Representatives is the surest basis of public tranquillity and happiness.—Nor do we hope or expect to preserve your favour any longer than we continue to deserve it by our adherence to the true principles of the Constitution.

We are, Gentlemen, with the utmost respect,

Your much obliged and most obedient
humble servants,

J. CAVENDISH,
C. TURNER.

Paper III.

Printed by J. B. Smith, at the Press of the County of York, in the City of York.

Paper III.

Advertisement by the High-Sheriff of the County of York, calling a Meeting of the County, on the 27th of September, 1769.

YORK, August 26, 1769.

MANY Gentlemen of the County of York having desired that a General Meeting might be assembled to consider of the most effectual methods to secure the Constitutional Rights of the Electors of Great Britain; in consequence thereof this notice is given, that a General Meeting will be held at the Assembly-Room in York, on Wednesday the 27th day of September next—at which it is requested that all the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the said County will give their attendance.

J. IBBETSON,
Sheriff.

Paper IV.

*Paper IV.**Proceedings at a General Meeting of the County
of York, on the 27th of September, 1769.*

ON Wednesday the 27th of September there was a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Freeholders of this County, in pursuance of the advertisement from the Sheriff.—The Assembly-Room was quite full by twelve o'clock; yet notwithstanding the numbers, the business of the Meeting was carried on with great regularity and decorum.

Sir GEORGE ARMYTAGE, the late Representative for this City, opened the Meeting, by calling on the Members for the County to give their Constituents an account of the proceedings of the House of Commons on the Middlesex Election.

Sir GEORGE SAVILE then stood up, and said he thought it his duty, when called upon, to lay before his Constituents an account of the business in which they had thought fit to employ him. He delivered himself with great perspicuity, freedom, and earnestness, so as greatly to affect all who heard him; and concluded by expressing his own sentiments of the dangerous tendency of the late decision by the House of Commons in the case of JOHN WILKES, Esq; and

pointing out to the Meeting, for their consideration, the various methods of applying for redress.

Mr. LASCELLES spoke after him.

Sir GEORGE ARMYTAGE then addressed himself to the Meeting, in a very animating speech, concluding with a motion for a Petition to his Majesty, which was seconded by Sir Cecil Wray, and received with general applause.

A Petition was then read in the following words:—

To the KING's most excellent Majesty.

May it please your Majesty,

WE, your Majesty's most faithful and loyal subjects, the Freeholders of the County of York, equally solicitous for the honour of your Majesty's Government, and for the preservation of our most happy and excellent Constitution, beg leave to approach your Royal Throne, and humbly to lay before your Majesty the anxiety of our minds on a matter of the greatest national concern.

As the County of York hath been eminently distinguished by its zeal for your Majesty's illustrious family, so hath it ever been strongly attached to that System of Laws which your Majesty's ancestors were called to protect. By these Laws we are taught, that it is the undoubted right of the Subject to petition the King, and the exercise of that right becomes the duty of the Subject whenever an ill-advised measure threatens to impair that equal state of legal liberty, for which this Nation has long been respected

respected abroad, and by which it hath been made happy at home.

We find ourselves called to the exercise of that right, and the discharge of that duty, by our apprehensions of the tendency of that measure, which has nominated a Representative to the County of Middlesex, in opposition to the votes of a great majority of the Freeholders, and in prejudice to that Freedom of Election which your faithful Commons are entitled to by the Laws and Constitution of this Country.

We respect, as we ought, the authority of the House of Commons, and their just privileges will ever be dear to the People; but the House of Commons derives its existence from the Election of the People, who never have entrusted that House with an authority to supersede the choice of the Electors, or to create, by a vote, an incapacity unknown to the Law. If this were the privilege of the House of Commons, it would soon render that House a Body chosen by its own Members, and not the Representatives of the People. It is, therefore, with unspeakable concern, that we are obliged to represent to your Majesty, that this event hath produced a situation new and extraordinary in this Government—*The Representation of the People in opposition to the People!*

This situation would be miserable indeed, had not the wisdom of our ancestors provided, even for this grievance, a regular and constitutional remedy. The power of assembling and dissolving Parliaments is undoubtedly one of the rights

vested in your Majesty, for the welfare of the People, and by their consent. The voice of a loyal People now calls for the exercise of this power ; and our most essential Rights are to be preserved by it.

Permit us then, Royal Sir, to implore your Majesty to restore the confidence of your People in the justice of Parliament, by sending them to a new choice of Representatives, which will give your loyal Subjects an opportunity of demonstrating their zeal for the Constitution by a choice of Men, who will guard the honour of the Crown, and support the Rights of the People.

On a shew of hands, there was only one held up against the Petition. The Gentleman being called upon, gave his reasons for dissenting from so general an opinion ; but the answer made to him appeared so satisfactory, that, upon the question being again put, the Petition was approved *nem. con.*

The Petition was then engrossed, and signed that day by above one thousand persons who were present at the Meeting ; and it was agreed that it should be presented by the High-Sheriff, and several of the principal Gentlemen of the County were named to attend him.

The business of the Meeting was concluded with the greatest harmony.

Paper V.

Paper V.

Advertisement by several Gentlemen, calling a Meeting of the County of York, on the 25th of September, 1770.

THE High-Sheriff of the County of York having this day refused to call a General Meeting, to consider what further measures ought to be taken concerning the late Petition to the Throne: We therefore request the attendance of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders at the Assembly-Room in York, on Tuesday the 25th day of September next, at twelve o'clock, for that purpose.

George Armytage,	John Dalton,
J. Cavendish,	H. Duncombe,
Cecil Wray,	B. Ferrand,
M. A. Wyvill,	Peter Birt,
William Anderson,	B. Foord,
James Pennyman,	F. Dodsworth,
James Norcliffe,	H. Osbaldeston,
James Ibbetson,	Stephen Croft, jun.
E. M. Ellerker,	Matt. C. St. Quintin,
John S. Smith,	J. Nicholl,
Wm. Weddell,	J. Farrer,
Walter Hawksworth,	Stephen Croft,
Nathaniel Cholmley,	Childers Walbanke,
J. Grimston,	Joseph Williamson.

Paper VI.

Paper VI.

*Proceedings at a General Meeting of the County
of York, on the 25th of September, 1770.*

AT a very large and respectable Meeting of the Freeholders of the County of York, on Tuesday the 25th of September, 1770, Sir GEORGE ARMYTAGE was called to the Chair, when he addressed himself to the Freeholders as follows :

GENTLEMEN,

THE great honour you have this day conferred on me, by calling me to the Chair, demands my most grateful acknowledgments.—I am sensible how unequal I am to the business of it, yet poor as my abilities are, 'tis with pleasure I employ them in your service.

It is necessary then for me, from my present situation, to acquaint you with the important business upon which you have this day met, in pursuance of an advertisement inserted in the

public papers; it is an object, Gentlemen, that merits your most serious attention; it is to consider what further measures ought to be taken in consequence of your late Petition to the Throne, which, with your leave, I will read.

(Here Sir George read the Petition.)

This, Gentlemen, your Petition, full of loyalty and affection to the King; breathing the sentiments of ten thousand of his Majesty's subjects—which, too, is a mode of proceeding strictly conformable to the principles of the Constitution, and unalienable from the Rights of the People; this your Petition, I say, has been by some unhappy influence neglected and disregarded.

Having had the honour of being deputed along with the late High-Sheriff to present this your dutiful Petition to his Majesty, it is my duty to inform you in what manner it was presented and received.

On our presenting the Petition to the King, he received it with a smile; which seemed to imply a mark of its gracious reception, and filled us with the hopes that the evils it complained of would be attended to; but we were soon taught, that the smile of a King, like the chaff which the wind scattereth, was, by the contagious breath of a Minister, driven from the Court, and the good purposes of this, your affectionate application to the Throne, had been defeated by the evil misrepresentations of those,
whose

whose only means to defend their own misconduct, is by denying that there is any cause for the present complaints, and declaring they are only the production of a few factious, discontented Individuals.

Have the Freeholders of the County of York merited this treatment? Have they not, on every occasion, distinguished themselves by their loyalty and affection for their Prince? And did they not, in the time of difficulty and danger, risque their lives and fortunes, and those of their posterity, in defence and support of this Government, even when the Crown tottered upon the head of its Wearer?

However we may be represented, by those in power, as Mock-Petitioners, and Men of factious and seditious principles, yet they would find, to their confusion, *the Standard of Liberty defended by thousands, whilst the Banner of Power was destitute of a single supporter.*—I would not be misunderstood, Gentlemen; I don't mean this as a threat, I only mention it as a matter of caution.

The two Great Oracles of the Law were applied to for their opinions respecting the Legality of the Middlesex Election. The one of them * pronounced it an illegal arbitrary measure, destructive to the Principles of the Constitution, and tending to subvert, in the most daring manner, the sacred Rights and Liberties of Englishmen; and declared solemnly that he

* Lord CAMDEN.

would

would never recede from this opinion. Whilst the other, the able and respectable Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench, eminent for his consummate knowledge of the Law, and whose opinion from his judicial capacity, the Public had a right to have, said, what did he say? *That his opinion should go down with him to the Grave!*—There is not the least doubt but had his sentiments corresponded with those of the Ministry they would have been readily delivered; but he, like an honest Man, would not, in defiance of his conscience, speak contrary to its dictates, and the clear the manly uncontrovertible declaration of Lord Camden.

What is to be expected by a repetition of our grievances in another application to the Throne, while that pernicious influence prevails, is evident, I doubt not, to every one present.—*Shall we again kneel at that altar, where our most ardent prayers have been ineffectual.*—For my part, I shall not vote for a Remonstrance.

The only eligible mode of proceeding, therefore, is to address our worthy Representatives; desiring an exertion of their vigilance; in order to discover by what secret, malign counsel your Petition has been thus unattended to, and still remains unanswered; to endeavour to penetrate into the real causes of the present discontent of their countrymen, and to use every rational means to dispel that dark cloud which intervenes between the King and his Subjects,
and

and which prevents the rays of Royal Justice and Paternal Affection from diffusing their healing influence on the minds of a generous People.

Thus situated, the question before them for their present consideration was, whether any, and what further steps they might think necessary to be taken; and that he had a proposal to make on that head, but that he would first request Sir George Savile to inform them of what had been done, relative to the Middlesex Election in the House of Commons during the last Sessions of Parliament.

Sir GEORGE SAVILE accordingly rose up, and said that it gave him very great concern to inform his Constituents, that nothing had been done in the House, which had the smallest tendency towards healing the wound the Constitution had received; that every attempt which had been made to apply a remedy, had only furnished an opportunity to their foes, to add insult to injury, and to cut off all hopes of redress, by a solemn confirmation of the grievance. He said, however, that the friends to their country, had endeavoured in two ways to remedy the evil, the one of which was in form of a bill for ascertaining the particular crimes, by which incapacity should be incurred; but it had been in its passage through the House, so mutilated in some parts, and clogged in others, by a method well known to every person the least conversant

versant in the nature of their proceedings, that it was impossible for the framers of it to know their own Bill, and who, therefore, very prudently embraced the first opportunity of withdrawing it, in which they were seconded by all its former most strenuous supporters. That being the case, he should forbear he said giving his opinion upon the efficacy of the proposed Law, but seemed to intimate that he did not think it would have answered the good purposes for which it was originally intended. He said that the other attempt was to declare, by a resolution "That the House of Commons in its adjudications on Matters of Election, was bound to determine according to the Law of the Land, and the usage and custom of Parliament which is part thereof." This proposition being sufficiently understood, needed no confirmation, The Ministry, however, by way of varying the thing, made this *trifling* addition, "and that this House in its determinations concerning the incapacitation of John Wilkes, Esq; have acted agreeably thereto." He left them, he said to make their own comments upon these proceedings; and assured them, that his sentiments upon that important subject remained unalterably the same; and concluded by congratulating himself upon his peculiar happiness, in having coincided so perfectly in opinion with his Constituents upon this as well as upon every other point, since he had received the

the high honour of being elected to serve the County of York in Parliament.

The Chairman then got up and informed the Meeting that he had a paper in his hand, in the form of thanks and instructions to the Representatives which he should submit to their consideration. The paper was as follows :

YORK, September 23, 1776.

To Sir GEORGE SAVILE, Bart. and EDWIN
LASCELLES, Esq.

GENTLEMEN,

WE, the Freeholders of the County of York, assembled here, desire to express our sentiments to you on the present dangerous situation of Affairs.

In presenting a petition to the Throne, we acted from the strongest conviction that it was our duty to represent to his Majesty how severely we thought the Rights of all the Electors of Great-Britain struck at, by that Resolution which nominated a Representative to a County, in opposition to the votes of a majority of the Freeholders.

We had reason to hope that an application so full of affectionate loyalty to our Sovereign,
and

and presented in a mode so agreeable to the Principles of the Constitution, would have met with a favourable reception. But we neither can nor will impute its failure to any other cause, than the arts and management of those who have no other means of justifying their own misconduct to their Sovereign, than by misrepresenting the desires and affections of a loyal people.

Hopeless of success from a reiterated petition, whilst the same influence prevails, we forbear to make a further application to the Throne, being confident that the former will remain an authentic testimony of our unalterable sentiments, which by every justifiable method, we are determined to support; and we doubt not that, by a steady perseverance in those principles, the Electors of Great-Britain must finally obtain redress of their violated rights.

Your conduct, Gentlemen, hath justly merited the thanks of your Constituents; and we have the satisfaction to declare, that we entirely approve all that you have done and said in support of their Liberties. By the explicit, manly, and determined part you have taken during the last Session of Parliament, the sentiments of those whose interest is intrusted to your care, have been most faithfully expressed.

It is not, therefore, to admonish or instruct, but to point you out as examples to animate and encourage others, that we now express our
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sense of the firmness and vigilance of your Conduct in these times of new and dangerous doctrines ; when not only Redress for the violation of the Rights of Election hath not been obtained, but every attempt to secure that right from future violations hath been evaded.

It is become but too evident, that neither the most sacred Rights of the People, nor the Honour of the Crown, have been objects of their care, whose stations render them more peculiarly responsible for a strict attention to both.

The public welfare then demands, that those who are chosen to guard its interests, should employ their utmost attention to inquire into the causes of that general dissatisfaction, which prevails in the minds of a free, a generous, and a loyal People ; and should there be found any just objects of national resentment, we trust that neither Ministerial Power shall be able to defeat, nor Retirement from Power elude the effect of that inquiry.

That the minds of his Majesty's Subjects may be united in a dutiful submission to legal authority, and a steady resistance to illegal Power ; and that the Rights of the People may be secured by the virtue and prudence of their Representatives, the natural Guardians of those Rights, is the fervent wish of every Friend of the Constitution, and you may be assured that, in pursuit

suit of these objects, you will always be supported by the Freeholders of the County of York.

By order of the Meeting,

GEO. ARMYTAGE,
Chairman.

The Address to Sir George Savile and Mr. Lascelles, being read, Mr. C. TURNER, Member for the City of York, rose up and spoke to the following purport. He observed that he saw the imminent danger of the Constitution, and the difficulty of assembling counties or large bodies of men, in order to obtain their sense upon Political subjects, of whatever importance; he had therefore opposed the Meeting of last year, and had by no means been aiding in this, from a fear that it should be represented as not the true sense of the County; and from an opinion that the sore would sooner ripen and discharge itself by gentle fomentations than by applying the knife; besides he thought the Constitution itself possessed an antidote against the poison. As the County, however were assembled, he could not but express his sentiments, that the means proposed were inadequate to their end. He approved of the thanking the Members, and instructing them to endeavour to bring to justice all delinquents, whether in or out of power; but thought this was not sufficient, for he said, their late petition had

had not been regarded, or even acknowledged. He therefore proposed that a Committee should be appointed to draw up a conditional Remonstrance, to be presented if the obnoxious Resolutions should not be rescinded next Sessions ; that this Committee should exist till then, with powers to increase their number ; and that it might be given them in instruction, to take care that no less than eight thousand attested Freeholders should sign it, otherwise not to be presented ; this he mentioned, he said, to give due weight to the measure, to undeceive the King, and to encounter any flurs which foul-mouthed Courtiers were too often ready to throw out.—Mr. Charles Turner likewise informed them of a fact, of which he said no Freeholder of the County of York ought to be ignorant—that their Representative Sir George Savile, while he was most nobly and manfully supporting their Rights, and speaking disagreeable truths to their opponents, was threatened to be sent to the Tower for speaking what was called *unparliamentary Language*.

Lord John Cavendish made the following reply : He said that in public matters there was no other method of collecting the sense of the People than by Meetings of this sort, that he had concurred in the measure of its propriety, and from his having found it to be the sense of a number of Gentlemen of weight and fortune in the County. That he conceived their intentions to have been, to testify at this Meeting, that their sentiments upon this subject in the
year

year 1770, differed not in the least from those which they had expressed in 1769. That he did not doubt but by a manly perseverance in those opinions, *tempered by moderation*, they would obtain more easily the *wished-for end*, and open the eyes of their Sovereign to his real Friends, who had at the hazard of their lives and fortunes supported his Crown in former days of danger, and who would even be ready to manifest the same zeal in defence of his illustrious Family, whose interests were so inseparably connected with the true interests of his People. He conceived this purpose to be fully answered by the method proposed by their worthy Chairman. He could not, he said, approve of reiterating their complaints to the Throne, from whence they had already found there was not at present the most distant prospect of success. He declared his conviction of the goodness of his worthy Colleague's intentions, but that he could not entirely enter into the idea of his Conditional Remonstrance, nor did he know how far it might be justifiable or even legal; or whether it would not, by having the appearance of threatening Parliament, rather have a tendency to obstruct, than bring about its purpose; and concluded by declaring his full approbation of the measure first proposed.

Mr. Charles Turner, in answer, stood up to explain his motion, and obviate the objection made to his proposal; but expressed his willingness

ness to alter it, in order that the Committee he spoke of, might not be restricted to any particular mode of proceeding, by Remonstrance or otherwise, but follow that method which might appear to them most eligible upon future consideration, or a change of circumstances; he consequently moved generally, "That a Committee be appointed, to consider further for redress of the grievances incurred by the various Resolutions of the House of Commons, touching the Middlesex Election." Upon the question however being put, it was carried in favour of the first proposal, which was accordingly agreed to, and ordered to be signed by the Chairman.

Sir Cecil Wray and several other Gentlemen approved in great part of Mr. Charles Turner's plan, and delivered their sentiments in its favour, though they did not wholly coincide with his opinion; and particularly with respect to the powers to be vested in the Committee.— This point being determined, Sir George Savile observed, that he could not avoid taking notice of that part of Mr. Charles Turner's Speech wherein he mentioned his having been threatened by implication. He was under very high obligations to his Friends, he said, for their kind expressions of fear on his behalf when only doing his duty in maintaining the Rights of his Constituents; but confessed that he himself had never entertained the smallest apprehensions on that head; but that, on the contrary, when the circumstance

circumstance alluded to happened, he thought he observed a particular complacency in the countenances of the majority, and an expression that they were conscious of the justness of his assertion; which uncommon forbearance he could impute to no other cause than the truth of what he had spoken. He added further, with respect to the instructions, that he was afraid he could flatter his Constituents with very small hopes of success in the prosecution of these Men, by whom this Country had been so grossly injured. Nothing, however, should be wanting on his part, for that he should be very happy to have it in his power to tie such offenders neck and heels, and resign them to the justice of their injured Country. He then finished, by assuring them of his constant endeavours in future, to merit that approbation of his conduct, which they had then been pleased to bestow upon him; and by declaring the high sense he had of that honour.

The proposal of a present Remonstrance was again agitated, but finally rejected, as they were unwilling to make the smallest alteration in the instructions, in which they had already professed their fixed determination not to renew their applications to a quarter where they had been found to be totally inefficacious.

Mr. Cholmley then moved for the Chairman to leave the Chair.—And thus ended the business of the day.

Paper VII.

*Letter by Sir GEORGE SAVILE to the Freeholders
of the County of York.*

*To the FREEHOLDERS of the COUNTY of YORK,
assembled on the 25th of September at York.*

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING had the honour of receiving, by the hands of Sir George Armytage, a communication of your sentiments, I beg leave, in the first place, to return you my grateful acknowledgments for such parts of it as regard myself.

I have always thought myself fortunate in the opportunities I have had of knowing, from time to time, the sentiments of my Constituents; and it has been my particular happiness to meet on those occasions with their approbation. I could indeed no longer serve them with satisfaction to my own mind, than I had reason to believe that my opinions coincided with theirs, at least in essential and fundamental points.

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The importance of the subject, the impression it has made upon my mind, and the variety of matter contained in the paper transmitted to me, oblige me to extend my answer beyond the length that is usual or necessary in mere returns of compliment, or in answers on more ordinary occasions.

It is impossible for me not to lament with you that any unhappy interposition of interested Men between a gracious Sovereign and his People, should make it eligible to forbear a second application; hoping and trusting, at the same time, that your confidence is well founded.—I do hold it to be impossible, while one grain of purity or vigour remains in the Constitution, that principles and doctrines directly subversive of it can take root and flourish, nay that they can ever exist with any continuance. I am tempted so far to go beyond the limits of what is more essentially a necessary part of my answer, as to express the satisfaction it affords me to observe, that while you decline a measure, which to many might naturally seem more directly tending to redress, you have taken effectual care plainly to draw the line, and strongly to mark the distinction, (that distinction so essential in *Questions of Right*) between *forbearance* and *acquiescence*.

I accept with a pride which I will acknowledge and avow every where, the testimony you bear to the little I have done in the prosecution of my duty; and I wish you to be assu-

red that I will persevere, not only in asserting, but in maintaining to the utmost of my power, those principles you have approved, the Principles of the Constitution; and more especially that first right, the Right of Election, under which alone my office exists, and without which even the two characters in which we are now conversing, the *Represented* and the *Representative*, are mere illusory fictions.

I desire likewise to assure you that I will omit no opportunity of fulfilling that particular duty which the present occasion has called upon you to remind me of; I mean the searching out the causes of public dissatisfaction, the objects of a just public resentment; trusting to your candour, if the success do not answer the warm expectations of many honest men, the ardent wishes of all. You have more than once over-rated my abilities to serve you; I wish I had not reason to fear that in this instance you will experience a striking example of it.

It is a first duty to join in your wish, that due order and submission, as well as a resolute adherence to the rights of Freemen may prevail. It is the most perfect self-interest and the highest ambition to join with you in the other, that I may be in any degree a fortunate instrument in preserving those rights. I beg leave to subscribe myself

Gentlemen,

Your much obliged
and faithful humble servant,

GEORGE SAVILE.

Paper VIII.

Paper VIII.

Letter by EDWIN LASCELLES, Esq; to the Freeholders of the County of York.

To the FREEHOLDERS assembled at YORK on the 25th of September, 1770.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is scarce possible for words to express the lively sense of gratitude I feel for the very favourable opinion you are pleased to entertain of my public conduct.

It has always been my greatest ambition to gain the approbation of Gentlemen of your characters. If I have been so fortunate to succeed, I must think I am more indebted to your partial opinions than to any real or substantial merit of my own.

I know it would be vain and impertinent to expect any future favours from you, was I ever to betray the trust you have condescended to honour me with.

I flatter myself whilst I preserve my Independence, and am not actuated with views of *Ambition*, *Avarice*, and *Lust of Power*, you will have no cause to withdraw your usual indulgence from me.

I have ever considered the very unfortunate decision of the Rights of the Freeholders of Middlesex as highly detrimental to those of all the Electors of Great-Britain, therefore shall steadily persevere to contribute all in my power to obtain redress of those violated rights.

I most heartily concur with you, Gentlemen, in all your Constitutional wishes. My greatest ambition is to render myself worthy of your choice, which I know can only be effected by supporting the Fundamental Principles of our Constitution, and the undoubted Birth-Right of our Fellow-Subjects; when you find me deficient in these grand points, I desire to enjoy no longer the honourable station of one of your Representatives; but, until that event happens, the only favour I now ask of you, is to give me credit for my unshaken loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign, my esteem and regard for the interest of our Fellow-Subjects, and my implicit veneration for our most excellent Constitution.

I have the honour to be, with the most sincere esteem and regard,

Gentlemen,

Your most obliged

and most faithful humble servant,

EDWIN LASCELLES.

GOULDSBROUGH,
September 28, 1779.

Paper IX.

Paper IX.

Letter from JOHN WILKES, Esq; to the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders, of the County of Middlesex.

GENTLEMEN,

IMOST heartily congratulate you on the success of your steady, spirited, and generous efforts, in the cause of the first consequence to every Elector in this Kingdom, the cause of the Right of Election, so long depending between you and a former House of Commons. After many years unavailing struggles against a despotic Administration, and a corrupt Majority in Parliament, your Public Virtue has by perseverance and unremitting energy at last brought a question of infinite moment to a final decision in favour of Liberty. We have now obtained a direct and unequivocal vindication of our most essential Rights, Rights coeval with the *English* Constitution, that perfection of human wisdom, that noblest work of man. You have the high satisfaction of observing an upright Senate

Senate assert the Privileges of an injured People against the encroachments of Power, and decide in favour of their fair and just claim to a share in the Legislature. The proceedings of this House of Commons I shall with rapture transcribe from their *Votes*. You will I am sure accept them as the only atonement, which could be made under a good Government for the violation of your Franchises, and the injuries of former flagitious Administrations. This branch of our Constitution is now restored to its original form, and established on a foundation not to be shaken. No precedent can now be drawn from the injustice and violence of arbitrary Ministers. An *Incapacity*, for the express purpose of defeating your declared intentions, will not be again created by a vindictive and venal Majority in one part only of the Legislature. A Minister will not again nominate the Representative for this respectable County to the Great Council of the Nation. The Man of your free choice will have the distinguished honour of representing you, and the glory is yours of having secured the same invaluable Franchise to every Elector in the Island. Not the least trace will now remain of the various deep-laid plans of fraud and violence, of subtle insinuation, alarming menace, and direct insult, to which your calm and undaunted spirit always rose superior. The Historian's page will however record the wickedness and infamy of your enemies, the Public robbers of the Rights of Free-
men,

men, and will hold up the steady virtue of the Freeholders of *Middlesex* as an object of imitation to all future ages.

My excellent colleague, Mr. *Byng*, seconded and supported my motion with the zeal, which always animates him in your service, and the cause of his Country.

Votes of the House of Commons, pages 574, 575, Friday, May 3, 1782.

The House was moved, That the entry in the Journal of the House, of the 17th day of February, 1769, of the Resolution, "That *John Wilkes*, Esq; having been in this Session of Parliament expelled this House, was and is incapable of being elected a Member to serve in this present Parliament," might be read.

And the same being read accordingly;

Resolved, That the said Resolution be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of the Rights of the whole Body of Electors of this Kingdom.

And the same was expunged by the Clerk, at the table, accordingly.

Ordered, That all the Declarations, Orders, and Resolutions, of this House, respecting the Election of *John Wilkes*, Esq; for the County of *Middlesex*, as a void Election, the due and legal Election of *Henry Lawes Luttrell*, Esq; into Parliament for the said County, and the incapacity of *John Wilkes*, Esq; to be elected a Member to serve in the said Parliament, be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of

of the Rights of the whole Body of Electors of this Kingdom.

And the same were expunged by the Clerk, at the table, accordingly.

Give me leave, Gentlemen, to state a circumstance with respect to a business of this weight and moment, which I am sure will add to the pleasure you receive in this triumph of Liberty. The victory was gained by the most honourable means, means worthy the goodness of the cause. No unfair method was taken to secure a Majority, nor Ministerial manœuvre practised. No letter from the Treasury, no mandate from any Secretary, issued to enforce attendance. The slightest solicitation was not urged by any man in power, nor a single Emissary sent on the wing to collect scattered mercenaries, troops long kept up for the worst of purposes, but now happily disbanded. Every man was left to follow the dictates of his conscience, which insured our success. The Ministers gave you only the same support as individuals this year, which they have regularly given since 1768, with an alacrity manifesting a settled determination to uphold and support the Rights of Election, which they have restored.

I am happy, Gentlemen, to acquaint you, that the appointment of a Committee to examine into the present state of the Representation of the Commons of *Great Britain*, is on the eve of being moved in the House of Commons by a Gentleman of as great abilities, matured even in youth,

youth, as this Country has at any time produced. You long ago suggested the idea of the propriety of such a measure, and in pursuance of your instructions I had the honour in *March 1776*, of moving the House of Commons for leave to bring in a *bill for a just and equal Representation of the People of England in Parliament*, but without success. The solemn engagement between us in 1774, at a numerous County Meeting, in relation to this and other essential objects, I have never lost sight of, and shall ever hold sacred. Some of the more important particulars of that engagement, respecting the fair and equal Representation of the People in the House of Commons, and the shortening the duration of Parliaments, are among the grand objects, the striking features, of the intended inquiry. You will always find me, Gentlemen, uniformly pursuing the noble plan of Liberty, which you early marked out for my conduct, and above all endeavouring to enforce the clear Right of the People to the free and frequent choice of their Representatives.

I am, Gentlemen,

With much respect and gratitude,

Your faithful, and obedient humble servant,

JOHN WILKES.

PAINTER'S COURT, WESTMINSTER.

Monday, May 6, 1782.

Paper X.

(414)

Paper X.

The Speech of Mr. WILKES in the House of Commons, on the 3d of May, 1782.

MR. SPEAKER,

I THINK myself peculiarly happy at the present moment, that I have the honour of submitting to the House an important National question respecting the Rights of Election, when the friends and favourites of the People enjoy, with the smiles of our Sovereign, the offices of trust and power in the State, accompanied with that fair influence, which is necessarily created by great ability, perfect integrity, the purest political virtue, and the remembrance of their former upright conduct in the cause of the People: If the People of *England*, Sir, have at any period explicitly and fully declared an opinion respecting a momentous Constitutional question, it has been in regard to the *Middlesex* Election in 1768, and the subsequent most profligate proceedings of an Administration, hostile by system to the Rights of this Country, and every

every part of the *British* Empire. An instance cannot be found in our history of a more general concurrence of sentiment among the Freeholders of *England*, and they were joined by almost every Borough and Corporation in the Southern part of the Island. I am satisfied therefore that I now shall find the real friends of the People determined and zealous in the support of their claims and undoubted privileges.

Hitherto, Sir, every attempt for the recovery of this invaluable Franchise has been rendered fruitless by the arts and machinations of power in the hands of wicked men, and I may with truth assert, that the Body of the People long addressed, petitioned, and remonstrated with manly firmness and perseverance, but without the least effect, or even impression. The full redress demanded by this injured Nation seems reserved to distinguish the present propitious æra of public Liberty among the early and blooming honours of an Administration, which possesses the confidence, and daily conciliates the affections, of a brave and sensible People. Their voice was never heard in a more clear and distinct manner than on this point of the first magnitude for all the Electors of the Kingdom, and I trust it will now be heard favourably. The general resentment and indignation ran so high against the House of Commons, which committed the outrage, that their immediate dissolution became the prayer of numberless petitions

to

the Throne. No man scrupled to declare them unworthy to exist in their Political capacity, the Public pronounced them *guilty* of sacrificing and betraying the Rights, which they were called upon by every tie of Justice and Duty to defend. The noble spirit of the Freeholders of *Middlesex*, persevering in the best of causes, undaunted by all the menaces of power, was the subject of the most general applause and admiration. The voice of the People was then in the harsh and sharp tone of passion and anger against Ministers. It will, I am persuaded, soon be in the soft and pleasing accents of joy and thankfulness to our deliverers.

It is scarcely possible, Sir, to state a question in which the People of this free Country are more materially interested than in the Right of Election, for it is the share, which they have reserved to themselves in the Legislature.—When it was torn from them by violence, the Constitution was torn up by the roots. I have now the happiness of seeing the Treasury Bench filled with the Friends of the Constitution, the guardians and lovers of Liberty, who have been unwearied and uniform in the defence of all our Rights, and in particular of this invaluable Franchise. I hail the present auspicious moment, and with impatience expect the completion of what I have long and fervently desired for my Friends and Country, for the present age, and a free posterity. The former conduct of those now in power affords me the most sanguine hopes

hopes of this day seeing Justice done a People, to whom they have so frequently appealed, who now look up to them with ardent expectation, with pleasure and esteem. Consistency, Sir, has drawn the right line of their political conduct to this period. It will now point out the same path of public virtue and honour. May I be indulged in a hint, which I mean to extend much beyond the business of the day, when I say that consistency will be attended with that stability and perfect security, which are the objects of every good Man's wishes for them? They have given us a fair earnest of their reverence for the Constitution by their support of two Bills, essentially necessary to restore the purity and independency of Parliament, I mean the *Bill for preventing Contractors sitting in the House of Commons*, and the *Bill for disabling Officers of the Revenue from voting at Elections*—

Mr. *Wilkes* was here interrupted by a message by Sir *Francis Molyneux*, Gentleman Usher of the *Black Rod*, desiring the immediate attendance of the House of Commons in the House of Peers.

The Speaker went directly to the House of Lords. After his return and report of what had passed, Mr. *Wilkes* said,

MR. SPEAKER,

I return my thanks to *Black Rod* for so luckily interposing in favour of this House, when I might possibly have again tired them with the important, however stale, case of the *Middlesex Election*,

Election, which their patient ear has for several years with much good-nature, suffered; I will now make some return to their indulgence, in profiting by the circumstance of this happy interruption, and not saying a single word about *Walpole* or *Wollaston*, *Coke*, or *Blackstone*, I will not detain the House longer than by observing the Parliamentary Form of desiring the Clerk to read the Resolution of the 17th of February 1769, which I shall then move to be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of the Rights of the whole Body of Electors of this Kingdom.

NUMBER I.

Paper I.

Advertisement for calling a Meeting of the County of York, which first appeared in the York Courant on Tuesday, December 14, 1779, soon after the death of *Thomas Duncombe, Esq;* High-Sheriff of the County.

To the NOBILITY, GENTLEMEN, CLERGY, and FREEHOLDERS, of the County of York.

THE death of the late respectable High-Sheriff of this county having rendered it impracticable to obtain a County Meeting, called in the ordinary mode, with that expedition which the distress of the country requires, the under-named gentlemen conceiving it to be the duty and interest of every independent person, in times of national distress especially, to exert his best endeavours, that measures for the public good may be concerted and

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and carried into effect, do earnestly request the nobility, gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders, of the county of York, to meet at the Assembly-Room in York, on Thursday the 30th of December, 1779, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, to consider what measures may be expedient in the present critical situation of public affairs.

W. Chaloner, Esq; Guisbrough
 J. S. Morritt, Esq; Rokeby Park
 J. Smyth, Esq; Heath
 R. Bell, Esq; Thirsk
 M. C. St. Quintin, Esq; York
 S. Croft, Esq; York
 S. Croft, jun. Esq; Stillington
 P. Milnes, Esq; Wakefield
 John Milnes, Esq; Wakefield
 James Milnes, Esq; Wakefield
 W. Strickland, Esq; Boynton
 Gen. Hale, the Plantation
 Hon. Gen. Cary, Leven Grove
 Rev. C. Wyvill, Burton-Hall
 R. Marriott, Esq; Leafshawes
 G. Elsey, Esq; Patrick Brompton
 Rev. Henry Zouch, Sandall
 Henry Pulleine, Esq; Carlton
 Sir Ja. Norcliffe, Bart. Langton
 W. T. Jolliff, Esq; Nunmonckton
 Sir W. Anderfon, Bart. Kilnwick
 Sir R. Hildyard, Bart. Winestead
 R. D. Hildyard, Esq; Sedbury
 Rev. J. Fountayne, D.D. Melton
 Rev. W. Mason, Aston
 Benjamin Ferrand, Esq; St. Ives
 Francis Maude, Esq; Leathley
 Ralph Jackson, Esq; Normanby
 William Wilson, Esq; Ayton
 Francis Pearson, Esq; Mowthorp
 S. Barlow, Esq; Middlethorp
 Thomas Weddel, Esq; Waddow
 H. Thompson, Esq; Kirby-Hall
 Rev. W. Dealtry, Skirpenbeck
 Thomas Sayer, Esq; Halifax
 Rev. Dr. Bacon, Wakefield
 William Withers, Esq; York
 Rev. F. Doddsworth, Watlafs
 Thomas Mayer, Esq; York

Benjamin Pead, Esq; Hull
 Samuel Oates, Esq; Leeds
 Francis Bacon, Esq; York
 O. Dawson, Esq; Leeds
 T. Arthington, Esq; Arthington
 T. Thompson, Esq; Staincliffe-Hall
 Sir G. Armytage, Bart. Kirklees
 Rev. John Pigott, Ofwaldkirk
 Adam Boulby, Esq; Whitby
 Rev. Robert Hodgson, Rawmarsh
 Tho. Reed Ward, Esq; Dinsdale
 Lord Viscount Downe
 Metcalfe Erocter, Esq; Thorp
 Richard Wilson, Esq; Pontefract
 John Hatfield, Esq; Hatfield
 Mr. Josiah Roberts, Sheffield
 John Sparrow, Esq; Winco-Bank
 Thomas Hayes, Esq; Ailsabie
 W. Tottie, Esq; Chapel-Allerton
 John Hatfield, Esq; Doncaster
 Rev. John Stacey, Ballafield
 R. C. Rudston, Esq; Hayton
 F. Smyth, Esq; New-Building
 Charles Pool, Esq; Hull
 J. S. Smith, Esq; Newland
 Christopher Rawdon, Esq; York
 Francis Wayne, M.D. Stokesley
 Sir W. Milner, Bart. Nun Appleton
 Sir W. Poulis, Bart. Ingleby Manor
 Dr. F. Wanley, Dean of Ripon
 Rev. John Robinson, Welburn
 Rev. J. Preston, Askam-Bryan
 Rev. J. Bourn, Hull
 Rev. Luke Yarker, Leyburn
 J. Yarker, Esq; Leyburn
 Dr. Swainston, York
 Dr. Kilvington, Ripon
 Dr. Greene, York
 Robert Sinclair, Esq; York

Ja. Hobson, Esq; Kirby-Moorfide
 Lionel Place, Esq; York
 Rev. W. Cayley, Burton Agnes
 Jerom Dring, Esq; York
 Sir James Ibbetson, Bart. Denton
 Samuel Tooker, Esq; Moor-Gate
 Jeremiah Batley, Esq; Halifax
 J. Dixon, Esq; Gledhow
 C. W. Childers, Esq; Cantley
 St. A. Ward, Esq; Hutton Pagnel
 Rev. S. Beilby, Kirk-Ella
 F. F. Foljambe, Esq; Aldwark
 Thomas Linfkill, Esq; Whitby
 Mr. J. Woodhouse, York
 Sir M. Pilkington, Bart. Chevet
 Hans Busk, Esq; Bull-House
 James Fenton, Esq; Glass-House
 Rev. James Wilkinfon, Sheffield
 Samuel Walker, Esq; Rotherham
 Rev. Godfrey Wolley, Thurnscoe
 Rev. John Griffith, Handsworth
 William Walker, Esq; Leeds
 J. A. Worrop, Esq; Carr-House
 Hatfield Kaye, Esq; Hatfield-Hall
 Rev. Dudley Rockett, York
 Rev. Edward Willan, York
 James Preston, Esq; Malton
 John Booth, Esq; Brush-House
 William Taylor, Esq; York
 Henry Booth, Esq; York
 Mr. Wright, Esq; Stamford-Bridge
 Thomas Mellish, Esq; Willerby
 Luck Annington, Esq; Firby
 Rev. Ben. Walker, Northallerton
 William Law, Esq; Swinithwaite
 S. Shore, jun. Esq; Norton-Hall
 Rev. Thomas Zouch, Wycliff
 Mr. Wakefield Simpson, Whitby
 Mr. Josiah Hulme, Halifax
 Mr. Alex. Fothergill, Carr-End
 Rev. Thomas Wakefield, Rowley
 Josiah Oates, Esq; Chapel-Town
 H. H. Fane, Esq; Elmsfall Lodge
 Edm. Lodge, Esq; Willow-Hall
 James Cooke, Esq; Halifax
 Mr. Ben. Dickinson, Halifax
 Rev. William Dade, Barnston
 Mr. Nathaniel Priestley, Halifax
 Mr. John Priestley, Halifax
 Mr. Robert Swaine, Halifax
 Mr. Nat. Pearson, Tyers-Hill
 W. Hawksworth, Esq; Hawksworth

Thomas Leach, Esq; Bradford
 Ja. Milnes, jun. Esq; Wakefield
 George Cook, Esq; Street-Thorp
 Tho. Thornton, Esq; Thornville
 William Brooks, Esq; Killingbeck
 John Holmes, Esq; York
 John Carr, Esq; York
 W. Dawson, Esq; Heworth Grange
 W. Baynes, Esq; Embay-Kirk
 Rev. W. Comber, Kirby Moorfide
 Dr. White, York
 Mr. R. Ayrton, Malton
 Rev. P. Marsh, York
 Mr. J. Mathews, Stokesley
 Edm. Smith, Esq; Cotescue
 Rev. James Lawson, West Witton
 Thomas Maling, Esq; Scarborough
 John Mathews, Esq; Whitby
 Rev. Robert Benson, York
 Mr. John Harrison, Guisbrough
 Rev. W. Williamfon, Guisbrough
 S. Richardson, Esq; Sowerby
 Mr. J. Halley, Scarborough
 Rev. Thomas Eglin, Scillingfleet
 J. Lee, Esq; Lincoln's Inn Fields
 Rev. J. Mitchell, Thornhill
 Rev. James Dixon, Ecclesfield
 Richard Fenton, Esq; Bank Top
 Rev. A. F. Eyre, Barnbrough
 Mr. W. Chapman, Barns
 John Deykin, Esq; Barnsley
 Mr. John Hirst, Clough
 Mr. William Jackson, Wath
 Harry Verelst, Esq; Aston
 W. Waines, Esq; Little Weeton
 Gam. Milner, Esq; Burton Grange
 Freeman Bower, Esq; Bawtry
 F. Shephard, Esq; Knarsbrough
 Rev. J. Armytage, Hutton Pagnel
 Thomas Cotton, Esq; Haigh
 F. Edmunds, Esq; Worsbrough
 Mr. William Harvey, Scarborough
 Thomas Cordley, Esq; York
 Rev. J. Whaley, Huggate
 Rev. Robert Stockdale, York
 Rev. M. Place, Kirby-Lonsdale
 Mr. William Warton, York
 J. Hainfworth, Esq; Leeds
 Mr. Thomas Hainfworth, Leeds
 Rev. Eustace Cais, Thirkleby
 Mr. Thomas Search, Stakerby
 John Parker, Esq; Woodthorpe

P. Wentworth, Esq; Tolston-Lodge
 Mr. T. Smith, York
 Mr. John Read, Leeds
 J. Courtney, Esq; Beverley
 W. Garforth, Esq; Wigginthorpe
 Wilmer Gossip, Esq; Thorp-Arch
 Mr. Thomas Hill, Leeds
 Mr. John Plowes, Leeds
 J. Stovin, Esq; Whitgift-Hall
 G. Osbaldeston, Esq; Hutton Busfel
 Mr. Charles Clapham, Leeds
 Bryan Cooke, Esq; Ouston
 Sir J. Ramsden, Bart. Byrom
 William Hill, Esq; Tadcaster

Thomas Wolrich, Esq; Leeds
 David Stansfield, Esq; Leeds
 Sir J. Sheffield, Bart. Cookridge
 Robert Shuttleworth, Esq; Forcet
 William Bagshaw, Esq; Coteshall
 Mr. John Green, Leeds
 Mr. Thomas Jones, Leeds
 John Hotham, Esq; Osbaldwick
 Mr. Abel Chapman, Whitby
 John Wilson, Esq; Broomhead
 T. Thwaites, Esq; Watley
 William Harrison, Esq; Orgrave
 Rev. Thomas Moseley, Stonegrave

Paper II.

*Proceedings of the County Meeting held at York
 On the 30th day of December, 1779.*

I. **R**esolved, (with one dissenting voice) that the Petition now read to this meeting, addressed to the House of Commons, and requesting that before any new burthens be laid upon the country, effectual measures may be taken by that House to inquire into and correct the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money; to reduce all exorbitant emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure places and unmerited pensions; and to appropriate the produce to the necessities of the State, is approved by this meeting.

II. Resolved unanimously, That a Committee of

of sixty-one gentlemen be appointed to carry on the necessary correspondence for effectually promoting the object of the petition, and to prepare a Plan of an Association on legal and constitutional grounds to support that laudable reform, and such other measures as may conduce to restore the Freedom of Parliament, to be presented by the chairman of the committee to this meeting, held by adjournment, on Tuesday in Easter week next ensuing.

III. Resolved, That a meeting of twenty-one members be empowered to act, and that their acts be considered as the acts of the committee.

IV. Resolved, That Sir George Armytage, Mr. Chaloner, Sir R. Hildyard, Mr. Morritt, Rev. Mr. Zouch, Sir J. Norcliffe, Mr. Strickland of Boynton, Dean of Ripon, Mr. J. S. Smith, Mr. P. Milnes, Mr. Croft, Mr. Bell, Rev. Mr. Wyvill, Mr. Hill, Gen. Hale, Mr. Smyth of Heath, Rev. Mr. Mason, Mr. Tooker, Mr. H. Duncombe, Mr. H. Thompson, Mr. Croft, jun. Mr. Duncombe, Mr. Dalton, Mr. Strickland of Beverley, Sir William Milner, Mr. Hawkefworth, Mr. James Milnes, Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Jackson, Rev. F. Dodsworth, Mr. Cradock, Mr. Carver, Rev. Mr. Mitchell, Sir Watts Horton, Mr. C. St. Quintin, Mr. Dring, Rev. J. Robinson, Mr. P. Wentworth, Mr. St. A. Ward, Rev. Mr. Cayley, Dean of York, Rev. Mr. Bourn, Rev. Mr. Comber, Mr. Marriott, Mr. G. Elfleay, Mr. Pool, Alderman Carr, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Thornton, Rev. Mr. Dealtry, jun. Mr. F. Smyth,

Rev. Mr. Eyre, Mr. Baynes, jun. Mr. Withers, Rev. Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Foljambe, Major Ferrand, Mr. Farrer, Mr. Garforth, and Mr. Hildyard, be the members composing the above committee.

V. Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Lords and Members of the House of Commons present, who honoured this petition with their support; and that the committee be directed to insert a copy of this resolution in the papers, with the names of those Lords and Members of the House of Commons annexed, viz.

Duke of Devonshire, Duke of Rutland, Marquis of Rockingham, Earl of Scarborough, Earl of Effingham, Earl Fitzwilliam, Earl of Egremont, Lord John Cavendish, Lord Lumley, Sir James Lowther, Sir George Savile, Lord Richard Cavendish, Lord G. H. Cavendish, C. Pelham, W. Stanhope, H. Goodrick, S. Finche, H. Peirse, W. Weddell, E. Lascelles, C. Turner, Sir James Pennyman, G. Sutton, Sir Thomas Frankland, and T. Frankland.

VI. Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill.

VII. Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to Wm. Chaloner, Esq; chairman.

VIII. Resolved, That this meeting do adjourn to Tuesday in Easter week next ensuing.

W. CHALONER, chairman of the meeting.

PETITION

Paper. III.

PETITION agreed to at the Meeting of the County of York, held the 30th day of December, 1779, which having been afterwards circulated through the County, was signed by near nine thousand Freeholders, and presented by Sir George Savile to the House of Commons, on the 8th day of February, 1780.

*To the Honourable the Commons of Great-Britain,
in Parliament assembled,*

The Petition of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of York,

Sheweth,

THAT this nation hath been engaged for several years in a most expensive and unfortunate war; that many of our valuable colonies, having actually declared themselves independent, have formed a strict confederacy with France and Spain, the dangerous and inveterate enemies of Great-Britain; that the consequence of these combined misfortunes hath been a large addition to the national debt; a heavy accumulation of taxes; a rapid decline of the trade, manufactures, and land-rents of the kingdom.

Alarmed at the diminished resources and growing burthens of this country, and convinced that rigid frugality is now indispensibly necessary in every department of the State, your petitioners observe with grief, that, notwithstanding the calamitous and impoverished condition of the nation, much public money has been improvidently squandered, and that many individuals enjoy sinecure places, efficient places with exorbitant emoluments, and pensions unmerited by public service, to a large and still increasing amount; whence the crown has acquired a great and unconstitutional influence, which, if not check'd, may soon prove fatal to the liberties of this country.

Your petitioners conceiving that the true end of every legitimate government is not the emolument of ANY INDIVIDUAL, but the welfare of the community; and considering that, by the constitution of this realm, the national purse is intrusted in a peculiar manner to the custody of this Honourable House, beg leave farther to represent, that until effectual measures be taken to redress the oppressive grievances herein stated, the grant of any additional sum of public money, beyond the produce of the present taxes, will be injurious to the rights and property of the people, and derogatory from the honour and dignity of Parliament.

Your petitioners therefore appealing to the justice of this Honourable House, do most earnestly

estly request that, before any new burthens are laid upon this country, effectual measures may be taken by this House, to inquire into and correct the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money; to reduce all exorbitant emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure places and unmerited pensions; and to appropriate the produce to the necessities of the State, in such manner as to the wisdom of Parliament shall seem meet.

And your petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

Paper IV.

*Substance of the Debate at the Meeting at York,
on the 30th of December, 1779.*

MR. WYVILL opened the business, by informing the gentlemen, that the idea of calling a Meeting of the County of York, had originated, not, as the enemies of the measure had asserted, with Lord Rockingham; nor yet with any other member of either of the two Houses of Parliament, but with a few private country gentlemen of the North-Riding, who were totally free from all party influence, and
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equally unconnected with the leaders of Administration, and their opponents; that by this declaration he would not be understood to convey the slightest insinuation of disrespect to the Noble Lord whom he had named. He had long considered his lordship as well intitled to the gratitude of his country, for his support of the rights of election during the Middlesex disputes, and his subsequent opposition to the great and growing influence of the Crown; still less would he be understood not to feel sentiments of the highest respect for the character of another distinguished person then present, who possessed the universal esteem and confidence of his constituents and the nation; and whom from that circumstance it was unnecessary to name. But he thought it proper at the outset of the business, to obviate misconceptions, by stating the fact as it really was.

He then adverted to the calamitous state of the nation, the immense extent of the present complicated war, the increase of the national debt, the stagnation of trade and manufactures, the decline of public credit, and the general fall of the land rents of the kingdom; and after insisting on the evident necessity that the expenditure of public money should, at a juncture of such distress, be directed on principles of the strictest œconomy, he proposed that the petition, which he held in his hand, should be read, and
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if approved by that assembly, should be presented to Parliament.

The first resolution being then proposed and read, Mr. CHOLMLEY rose, and declared that he had sat too long in the House, to think that a petition would be productive of any good effect; acknowledged we were under great burthens; but as the petition stated a misapplication of public money, Parliament would expect some proof of this: For his part, he had it only from common report.

Mr. DRUMMOND seconded Mr. Cholmley; and, recommending moderation and unanimity, said, that an expenditure of public money was subject to constitutional control by Parliament; that if any man had misapplied it, let that control be made use of. Striking off pensions, &c. is plausible in theory, but difficult in practice. He desired to know who was to be the censor, who was to judge of the merit of pensioners, and draw the line. He stated our late success as a prelude to future, and that they showed us still the terror of our enemies. He thought this a time to stimulate Government to more effectual measures; would wish to try one year more, for that Britain might in that space revive again; and therefore declared he would give a negative to the petition.

Mr. PRITCHARD said he envied the situation of the two last gentlemen, who seemed to be the only persons that were exempt from the distresses

ses of the nation, and ignorant of its calamities. One of them had asked who was to be the censor? He would answer the question—The people, the oppressed people were to be the censor. He professed himself attached to his King, but found himself bound by stronger ties of duty to his country. Proofs had been called for—Could stronger proofs be given than the last campaign? or even than the last Gazette *extraordinary* indeed? Let any gentleman produce a single instance where wise measures had been concerted, and carried into effect, and he would give up his opinion. He instanced America and Ireland, where the Lord Lieutenant had been obliged to individuals for the pay of his forces which defended the kingdom. Was it love for Ireland that made Lord North so anxious to hurry the Irish bills thro' Parliament? No—it was 64,000 bayonets pointed to his breast. How did we know that the new supplies would be expended to better purposes than the last? He then professed himself unconnected with party, and hoped, if our Petition was rejected, we should shew that we still had spirit to assert our rights.

Mr. INGLEBY said that many reasons might be urged against the petition, and mentioned particularly that it would anticipate Mr. Burke's intended motion.

Mr. SMELT

Mr. SMELT then addressed the Chairman, and said he waited in expectation that some person of better abilities and greater weight than himself would make it unnecessary for him to trouble the meeting with his sentiments on the subject of this day's consideration; but as several arguments occurred to him that had not been urged by any other Gentleman, he held it his duty to come forward and deliver them; but having never before the present occasion spoken in public, he was under the necessity of requesting not only their indulgence, but that, by a close attention to his argument, they would themselves assist him to draw the inferences which he could not make sufficiently obvious, and that such a defect of arrangement, as is natural to inexperience, might not be allowed to take any thing from the real and genuine value of what he had to offer.

Having received a circular letter, signed by many names for which he entertained the utmost respect, for some of them a particular friendship, he concluded that the business for which they had thought proper to call the county together must have been of the highest consequence, and that as the distresses of the country were held forth as the subject for deliberation, such measures only would be proposed as might tend to promote the common cause, and unite the minds of men in the defence of their country; zealous, therefore, to give his concurrence to measures of this salutary

tary nature, he at once determined to attend; but how was he then mortified to find that, instead of contributing to the support of Government, the avowed end of the present meeting was to divide its strength; for, to his apprehension, the object of the petition seemed to be to control the influence of the Crown; to prevent the Sovereign from disposing of that revenue which had been granted to him by Parliament; a measure from which, if carried into execution, he knew not what dreadful consequences to apprehend, but too clearly foresaw that its ruinous effects would be felt by the latest posterity.

Here Mr. Smelt entered into some particulars of his private history: that in a former war he had served as an engineer, but, on account of illness, had retired from that service, refusing a pension offered by Lord Ligonier, because he thought himself not entitled to it. That from York, the place of his retirement, he was called by the Crown to a duty the most important that can be confided to a subject; from his sense, however, of his inability to discharge it as he ought, he resigned the post of Sub-Governor of the Princes, and again refused the offer of a pension, though pressed in a most gracious manner to accept it. Again he retired into Yorkshire; but thither he was followed by the solicitations and commands of his gracious Master; to which he no longer could make resistance. Whether the annual payment that is made to

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me, said Mr. Smelt, be within the description of pension, I do not know. People may, perhaps, look on me as a pensioner, but the stipend which I receive is not upon the pension-list; it is paid from the privy-purse of my benevolent Master; but I am henceforward indifferent to whatever construction may be put upon it, for from this moment I shall cease to receive it; I resign it back—and now, Sir, I am an INDEPENDENT MAN.

From what he had related concerning his own conduct, it would not be difficult to collect his sentiments concerning pensions. He was, notwithstanding, an enemy to the petition, a petition that would take from the King the liberty to judge of his own benevolence, and subject the Sovereign to the guardianship of parliament: But this was the immediate end of the present petition; which, as it calls upon the House of Commons to inquire into the expenditure of public money; to set bounds to the munificence, and limit the discretion of the head of our State in the appointment and rewarding of his own servants; calls upon one branch of our Legislature unconstitutionally and illegally to interfere with the operations of another. But the petition goes farther, and in direct terms requires of the House of Commons to check the influence of the Crown. To what he had already said concerning the illegality of such an attempt, he would now add, as a reason for not desiring
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such a procedure from that House, that the influence of the Crown was not by any means what it was stated, exorbitant; on the contrary, it required to be increased; the influence of the King, was too little; his hands wanted greatly to be strengthened; for, *good God*, he was unable now to curb that licentiousness with which he was every day talked of in every company, and in every street. He was unable to put to silence the numerous libels with which he was daily insulted. He cannot even restrain the insertion of a paragraph in an ordinary news-paper. And yet, while he was thus circumscribed, what measures are now about to be adopted? Such as shall invest him with power to restore tranquillity, and to enforce respect? No, but the very reverse. The measures proposed to this meeting tend only to the introduction of anarchy and confusion; to reduce the idea of authority, and to draw from before the Crown that veil with which the wisdom of the constitution has surrounded it; that sacred veil behind which the vulgar eye should never be permitted to penetrate, and which only the greatest and most important occasions should ever remove from before the splendours of Majesty. Unseen, and withdrawn from inspection, the condition of Royalty should admit no supposition of human weakness; and, though the Crown may devolve, it should secretly devolve, its uninterrupted operations should exempt the
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Royal person even from the idea of mortality; the utility, the necessity, of support and respect to that character, whose uncontrolled exertions alone give vigour and efficacy to the operations of the state, should exempt it from the possibility of error, and consequently from every effort like that in which they were then engaged, to contract the power, and abridge the influence of the King. Let Royalty be divested of power and influence, and what then remains? It is no longer the hand, the heart, the nerve, the vigour, and the energy, of the state; deprived of life, it is but the skeleton of itself. Not such as ours on this day, said Mr. Smelt, was the sense of our forefathers at the important *Æra* of the Revolution. They considered then the Royal person as the law had instructed them to consider it, and even in the act of delivering their country from oppression, saved to the King those privileges with which the constitution had invested his station and character. The Crown was not supposed then to have been rendered vacant: This would have violated that immortality which the law has conferred upon the King. No charge of criminality was then urged as a ground for deposing and driving the unfortunate Monarch into exile: This would have supposed an objected error, from the possibility of which the law had exempted the King. No, such was then the delicacy of the Legislature, such the zeal to maintain the royal dignity uninterrupted

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and pure from the imputation of blame, that the deliberation of three whole days was bestowed on forming and resolving upon the single word *Abdication*; a word by which no penalty was recorded to imply a crime, and by which the most distant imagination of a discontinuance in the Royal character was absolutely precluded. That reverence, and the value of that reverence which is due to the Crown, was then well understood, and it was accordingly preserved: The hand of Legislature did not then rashly draw aside the veil, and authorize the subject to invade and scan the secret recesses of majesty. By their act the importance of this maxim, that "The King can do no wrong," was then acknowledged; and such indeed was its importance, that he did not hesitate to affirm, that in that single maxim the *only* safeguard of the people was contained. It was only from the maintenance of his strength, in which the strength of all was comprised, that the security of the people could be derived. Why then should we endeavour to contract and diminish his ability to extend that protection which alone is the liberty of the subject? for he knew no sense of liberty but protection and security: We were in need of his protection: We were at this time in a particular manner in need of his protection: Let us rather therefore take a course opposite to that proposed; let us confidently contribute to his strength, and, when we have enlarged his power, let us then with humility implore

plore, and with gratitude receive, protection from the King; for by protection and security, he contended for it again, the only liberty was to be understood.

Having paid much attention to constitutional objects, he begged leave to give the meeting a part of his experience, and referred them to times when principles of a different nature from those which were now complained of, actuated the motions of government. What were the advantages derived to the nation from the administration of Whiggism? The power of the King was then contracted within as narrow a compass as the most zealous advocate of the present petition could desire to contract it now; but were we therefore exempt from corruption? Were the finances of the kingdom then directed to objects of the most extensive public utility? Did œconomy then preside in every department of the State; and were national expences then only the price of national benefits? No; the narrow principles of *Self* actuated the measures and pursuits of the Whigs, and while the King was limited, we can hardly say that the Crown was not arbitrary; but its influence was vested then in the party of the Minister, which leaving the dignity of King *de Jure* to be possessed by the person of the Sovereign, assumed to themselves, and exercised the office of King *de Facto*. Distinct from the King, the Minister then constituted a fourth branch of the Legislature, which

absorbed within itself the whole power and efficacy of the Crown. Motives only of a little, narrow, and private policy in the hour of their prosperity actuated the conduct of the Whigs, and these motives had uniformly to that day continued to influence their contracted and self-interested measures. Pretexts of freedom when in power, and of invaded liberty when out of confidence, had been the ordinary instruments of the party to acquire popularity, and bend the nation to their views; hence discontents and jealousies were excited at home; hence the complaints of our brethren in Ireland had been fomented; and hence the rebellion in America grew to so stupendous a height, that almost at the first it was irresistible. The people were the supports on which the Whig Minister sought to sustain his power; to the ignorance and error of the people, therefore, the real advantages of the nation were to be sacrificed, and the debt, which threatened to sink it in the end, was allowed to increase, rather than that a Minister should hazard his popularity upon the exaction of such a revenue as might serve to reduce the burden, or prevent its farther accumulation. One man, it must be admitted, has appeared who had spirit enough to proceed; and who, without the loss of public confidence, was sufficiently daring to draw unnumbered millions from the public purse; but the splendid and dazzling glories of his administration were accepted of as a compensation for

for whatever real injury his want of œconomy might draw upon the country. Lord Chatham indeed filled one particular department with great applause, and perhaps at the time when he was called to conduct the affairs of this country, he was the most able person that could have been found to conduct them. We were then engaged in a war that comprehended almost the whole world, and he was formed to conduct a war; but to this alone his talents were confined; a successful field compensated to him for unlimited drafts, upon the resources of the nation. In short, if he might be allowed the comparison, Lord Chatham was formed to glare a meteor in a storm, but by no means qualified to conduct finances in the time of peace. And from the general neglect or ignorance of this particular line of ministerial duty, it is that we may derive the weight of our present burden, the vast increase of our national debt: For one of the greatest misfortunes of this country was, that no Minister was found sufficiently firm to keep up the taxes in the time of peace to the greatest height of a war establishment; for if—(*Mr. Smelt being here interrupted by a violent hissing throughout the room, said he believed, as a freeholder, he had a right to speak his sentiments, and conscious that his motives were the purest and the best, he would speak his mind to the face of the stoutest hisser of them all*);—if in the hour of peace, he said, there subsisted sufficient foresight in administration to look forward

towards the exigencies of war, we should not then be taken unprovided; for thus, provision might be made against the day of danger, and we should not, in the very hour of pressing necessity, be obliged to purchase every requisite article at the most exorbitant prices. But such was the delinquency of those men who were then entrusted with the conduct of our affairs, that if the late war had broke out only two years later than it did, even out of the decayed fleet, which he saw himself at Plymouth, we should not have had fit for service more than a *single* ship in twenty; we should not even have possessed a ship that had been capable of repair.

Such were the fruits of a system in which the King was to be controlled, and in which his influence was to be contracted. And now, if the nation labours under a series of misfortunes, is it to the influence of the King that they are to be imputed? No; experience, and that state of facts which he had just laid before them, incontrovertibly demonstrated that it was only to his want of influence they could justly be ascribed; it was only from his not having power enough that our miseries arose. It was true that the party which had occasioned our national misfortunes, had been steadily excluded from confidence, and denied any share in that power which they had long endeavoured to centre entirely in themselves; they had nevertheless unhappily retained sufficient power to deceive and to exasperate

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rate the nation against their Governors, to sow the seeds of discontent, and even to call together the people *there* to assist them in making resistance to the only power from whence their safety can be derived, and to charge against the influence of the crown those calamities of which themselves are the only Authors. Yes, he repeated the assertion, and again averred, that not from the crown, but from the people themselves it was that the calamities of the nation proceeded; that not from the Crown, but from these slaves of selfishness and party it was, that our evils have derived their original: In every the minutest transaction the zeal of party and corrupt attention to little private interests appeared, he knew no man that was exempt from their contemptible influence; nay, he verily believed that he might, with truth, affirm, there did not subsist on that day a single patriot in the nation; no not one: And if he might use a comparison which he once remembered to have heard made by a gentleman, and which was lamentably applicable to the present occasion: "Britannia, who once proudly raised her head above the nations of the earth, and held one even course: Britannia, in better days the parent and the nurse of heroes, now but the putrid carcase of herself, gives birth to a nauseous brood of reptiles that owe their existence to her dissolution, that only in corruption can find their proper nourishment, and each of which crawls on in

"its own different way." Lord Orford, who, by the means of party, long directed the councils of this country, and who was consequently conversant with the spirit of party, pronounced, as the sum of his experience, That all men had their prices; and in this opinion he was inclined to believe, that his lordship did not judge much amiss; for ever since his own first entrance into life, he had observed the corrupt influence of party-spirit which had descended even to the election of Coroners, but had uniformly refused to act at all, unless upon the narrow principle of Self.

He remembered a time, not many years since, when this county was called together upon another occasion; and from what he recollected of the transactions of that meeting, and from what he now saw of the dispositions of the present meeting, he found that in that room it could blow both hot and cold. Nine years ago, the influence of the King was not considered as the original of the grievance complained of, his power was then looked up to as a remedy which the constitution had provided for what was called an infringement of the people's right of election; he was then considered as worthy of some respect and deference, and was accordingly called upon to dissolve a Parliament for expelling and excluding a man whose private character there does not subsist a mouth so foul as to vindicate: But what is now the case? The superiority
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that was then acknowledged is now rescinded; and the King is submitted to that very power, the existence and continuance of which was formerly confessed to depend solely upon his Royal will and pleasure; he was then implored to exert his prerogative, and to inflict the penalty of dissolution upon a delinquent Parliament; whereas, on the present occasion, Parliament is to be implored to control and restrain the expences and influence of the King. Are these things consistent, and with what face shall we now directly aim at reducing the authority we then appealed to, under the subjection of the very body over which we then acknowledged its legal extent? Our own act, had borne witness to the just prerogative of the Crown, and shall we now stand forth an example of violence offered to the power that is vested in the King by our Constitution? The eyes of the whole nation, are turned upon the resolutions of this day; we cannot therefore be too much guarded against the consequences of what we are about to do. Oh! let the probable effects of an attempt to shift the balance of our constitution alarm your caution; interpose yourselves in behalf of ages yet unborn; and avert that melancholy train of national misfortunes that must necessarily attend upon a popular encroachment on the power of the King; to this alone it is that the petition before you tends: He therefore beseeched them by every obligation that could influence the lover of his country,

country, to reject it; from every principle of public and private interest he warned them to reject it; from that loyalty and affection that is due to the most gracious and amiable Prince, at this time engaged in the arduous conduct of a war the most just that ever was entered into, prevail upon them to reject the petition, and let us seek for the redress of our calamities from means in our own power to carry into effect. Let reformation begin with the body of the people; let it proceed from the source from which our calamities proceed; let us not impose upon ourselves, or be deceived into an opinion, that it is a zeal for the public welfare that has prompted the measure proposed; it is not in the leaders of the people that such a zeal is to be found; no, the influence of private ambition actuates their conduct; the disappointed pursuit of emoluments, that, while conferred on other men, are made the pretext for their seditious murmurs, is the real and genuine amount of their grievances. It is not from those of whose corruption we even now complain that we can hope to receive redress, why therefore demand it from their hands? From the King alone it is that we may look for it with propriety; for besides that he is the only power on which the constitution directs us to rely, if there be a patriot in this country he is now upon the throne: The King, was not only the first, the greatest, and the best, but, he was sorry to say it, he believed he was the ONLY patriot in
this

this country. But it is yet more immediately from ourselves that we should seek for the advantages that we are now pursuing by such inadequate means. The body of the people is corrupt; the principles of the electors are corrupt; let them return to virtue, and choose for their representatives discreet and dispassionate men, such men as are recommended to their choice by the writ of election, for these alone are the legal means of checking unconstitutional influence, and securing the liberties of this country. Their danger does not proceed from the quarter that is struck at by the petition, which is a measure much more likely to prove fatal to them than any of which it complains. But, on what mistake concerning our constitution do we found an application to the lower House of Parliament, to make the King accountable to their authority for the manner in which he shall choose to dispose of the money that has been granted to him? Under what error do we call on them to investigate the influence, to control the power, or to interfere with the exercise of the power of the King? On what grounds can the petition to the House of Commons pretend to propriety? On this opinion alone it can be grounded, that the King is the servant of the people; but this opinion is not founded in truth; it is a narrow, a little, and a mean idea; the King is not the servant of the people; he is their soul; he is the soul of the constitution; from him and him
alone

alone the constitution derives its energy; from him alone the operations of the state derive their efficacy; he is the life, the soul, the very existence of the constitution; and shall we then endeavour to obstruct his operations, and sue for a restraint to be put upon the very principle of our political life? No, we should, he confidently trusted adopt a wiser and a more constitutional course; we should reject the petition so ill calculated to procure any one constitutional benefit to the state, a petition only calculated, by encroachments on his just authority, and with the language of complaint, to inflict still farther anxiety upon the benevolent heart of our gracious Sovereign, in an hour when he is on every side surrounded by the most arduous difficulties. To these it is not the part of dutiful and affectionate subjects to add, but on the contrary to contribute their utmost endeavours to extricate him from them; to the petition framed for such purposes therefore as this proposed for our adoption, he would on these principles for ever oppose himself. Let us unanimously join to reject it, and, in the place of an unconstitutional application to Parliament, substitute an address to the throne expressive of our loyalty to the best of Princes, our unlimited confidence in the wisdom and firmness of his administration, our zeal to contribute our whole strength to the support of his Government; and our determined resolution to co-operate with such measures as
his

his paternal wisdom shall judge fit to be adopted for the maintenance of our constitution and the defence of the state. It is only such a measure as this that ought to be adopted by the present meeting, and while he reprobated the petition, it was only to such a measure as this that he was ready to contribute his most hearty concurrence.

Mr. TURNER succeeded Mr. Smelt, for whom he expressed the warmest affection as his friend and his relation; he nevertheless lamented the influence of a court upon the sentiments of a man, whom he had always considered before as a friend to liberty, and a zealous enemy to every species of corruption. He did not doubt but that some part of Mr. Smelt's charge against Whig administrations might be true, because a Whig in power was very often like a Tory. He now read a long, a very long list of pensions and exorbitant salaries, and declared that even the proxies of the Lords, whom he called the Upper House of Corruption, had their prices. He asserted therefore the right of the people to demand an account of the money which they had themselves granted, and said that, however impracticable, it was constitutional that one branch of Legislature should control another. That the Crown had obtained an excessive influence, he would not say that the KING had, for he censured and lamented the indelicacy of Mr. Smelt in having brought his person into the question; but he again averred that the influence

fluence of the Crown was such as to have bought up the representatives, and taken away from the people all their natural power; that to contradict this was a mean state hypocrisy, a meer cloak, which, like the juggling of popery, was used only to cover snares and every other species of fraud.

Mr. HILL rose next; he objected to Mr. Smelt's direct mention of the Royal name, as disrespectful to the King in bringing it forward, when his Ministers only came under the censure of the assembly; and indelicate to the meeting, as tending to intimidate his hearers. The King, he doubted not, might be a patriot; it was the undue influence of his Ministers that excited our indignation; it was their misconduct that was universally felt. He acknowledged Mr. Smelt's assertion that we want protection from the Crown: 'The loss of half our dominions, and the wretched state of the remainder, too clearly prove that we do want protection. He averred that the majority in the House of Commons was maintained by an undue influence, and that as to the selfish principles which, according to Mr. Smelt's doctrine, governed the people, and descended even to the choice of Coroners, they could be more truly objected to Government, who had interfered in elections by *quo warranto* and the disfranchisement of electors. He instanced this in the case of Portsmouth. By this instance also, which Sir William Blackstone had

had pronounced more dangerous than any other stretch of prerogative, he farther asserted, that although the trial by jury, and the execution of our municipal law were still preserved to us intire and unaffected by the tyrannous claims of prerogative, or the violence of former usurpation, that constitutional protection which is derived from the control of Parliament over the executive power was withdrawn, this controlling power of the legislative body being in a manner absorbed by the executive. He was happy to find an opposition to the petition proposed, and still more so that it came from the narrow quarter of the *King's friends*, a name assumed by men who were least of all entitled to it. He could not well understand Mr. Smelt's attack on Whiggism, as by the operation of Whiggism the present family was seated on the throne. He could easily infer from it, that Mr. Smelt was not (as he had affirmed) of no party, for his violent opposition to Whigs showed that he was of the contrary party; and hence he deduced a melancholy presage of a future reign, which, from the doctrines that must have been instilled into the Prince of Wales, he greatly feared might become more oppressive than even that under which we suffer the grievances we now complain of. He touched on the profit of 80,000*l.* to Lord Cadogan on a late coinage, and affirmed that Dr. Franklin had urged this very instance of English extravagance to Holland as a ground for a loan to America.

America. He now thought he had a right to demand the opinion of Sir George Savile (who represented Yorkshire) upon the enormous influence of the Crown, and called on him to come forward and declare his knowledge on the subject. He quoted Lord Bacon's assertion, that virtuous men who have not children have been frequently known to adopt their country, and consider it with a parental affection; this he most justly applied to

Sir GEORGE SAVILE, who now came forward and said, that he had not originally intended to have spoken, but that being so urgently called upon by one of his constituents, he should now deem silence a species of high-treason against the Majesty of the People. He declared that having long sat in Parliament in an uncomfortable, cheerless, and ineffectual minority; and at the same time, uncertain whether his conduct was agreeable to the sentiments of those whom he represented, he had long ardently wished, that he had even hungered and thirsted for some such measure as the present, and that now it was an infinite satisfaction to him to find himself justified by the declared sense of his constituents. To the influence of the Minister, he said, he could not indeed adduce the legal evidence of Westminster-Hall, but that it was one of those facts the public notoriety of which might justify the inferences that were drawn from them, and that a man who now sought
for

for the reason of a ministerial vote in any other way than that of influence, would be universally derided for his simplicity, as being a mere Parson Adams. He now replied to the only three arguments that had been urged against the petition: To the first, that "not we but Parliament must redress the grievances complained of;" he answered, that the present application was to Parliament.—To the second, "That there was no proof of the misapplication of the public money:" he replied, that though it was not very easy to establish a charge against particular points of mismanagement, yet the general state of the country was a sufficient evidence of a want of integrity in the conduct of its finances. If a steward, for instance, to a private person, should, instead of profits, return only an annual catalogue of losses, and if, upon inquiry into the cause, it could not be learned from his distracted accounts—he desired to know whether a charge of mismanagement would not lie against him, and whether his employer, though unable to specify the particular circumstances of his neglect, would not be justified, on the general appearances, and a certainty of his being unprofitable to his affairs, for dismissing him from his trust as an unfaithful servant?—To the third objection, which was the impropriety of a Parliamentary interference with the Royal revenue, he briefly opposed, that the revenues were granted by, and were constitutionally under the controul of Parliament.

Sir JAMES NORCLIFFE rose next, and determining to imitate Mr. Smelt's address to the meeting in only two circumstances, first, like him, recorded some particulars of his own life. This, he said, had its commencement on the other side of the Tweed; that his first entrance into this country was in the train of his late Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, when he returned from conquering the Pretender and his adherents; that in consideration of the assistance the Duke had received from his family, and their zealous attachment to the succession of the House of Hanover, he was then (though very young) taken under the protection and patronage of his Highness; that having long served in the army, and now seen a much younger officer (though much more closely connected with his countryman, the Earl of Bute) put over his head, he had retired on half-pay, which, as Mr. Smelt had resigned his pension, he would immediately order to be struck off the list. He wished to avoid all abstract doctrines concerning the Crown; apprehended that the King, *as soul of the constitution*, had sufficient power; but, if not, he did not see how it was possible to give him more. Of the extent of his patronage he then produced many instances, and hoped that the power of granting supplies might still be reserved to the people, otherwise they must become light in the scale, and lose their constitutional importance; that it was their right, and consequently that it was an extraordinary doctrine to say that
it

it was indelicate for them to inquire into the civil list; it had been said indeed at the time of augmenting it, that it would be handsome first to grant, and then to call for the account: The grant has been some time made, but where is the account? It has been held back, and therefore the grant has become a grievance.

Mr. STANHOPE said, That he should not have risen on this occasion, had he not been encouraged by the example of Sir George Savile, who had replied to several arguments used in the course of the debate. One of the speeches indeed which he had heard, he observed was so extraordinary in its nature, that he could not help thinking it a crime to pass it over in silence. He therefore would beg the attention of the meeting while he went through the principal doctrines maintained by Mr. Smelt; and added, though he was ready to pay every tribute of applause to the private character of that gentleman, he could not help lamenting that one who had always been represented to him as a very worthy man, should so far forget himself in the speech he had just now made. He first took notice of an opinion which Mr. Smelt had endeavoured to insinuate, viz. That the measures adopted at the meeting originated in the minority. This, Mr. Wyvill had controverted, and he, as one of the opposition, could assure the gentlemen present, that this opinion was absolutely false.

Mr. Smelt had asserted that the influence of the Crown was infinitely too small—this assertion he would never attempt to disprove—*valeat quantum valere potest.*

Mr. Smelt had given a curious definition of liberty—liberty, he said, consisted in security and protection—if so, liberty was enjoyed in France, in Spain, and every other despotic government, for every government holds out security and protection to its subjects. Liberty really consists in the right we possess of defending ourselves, and of redressing our own grievances.

As to what had been said about the veil drawn before Majesty, &c. &c. he supposed Mr. Smelt alluded to some *arcanum imperii*, of which, in the constitution of the English government, he professed himself to be entirely ignorant.

Mr. Smelt had dwelt much upon a maxim laid down by the civility of our law, “That the King can do no wrong;” a maxim, which, taken literally, was absolutely blasphemous, and at best involved a question not fit to be agitated in quiet times like the present.

He thought that Mr. Smelt would have done well not to have said any thing concerning the former state of Plymouth, the late transactions in the channel might have rendered his silence on that head at least a measure of prudence.

What had been said of Lord Chatham too, he thought, might as well have been omitted; for how could any man pretend to judge of Lord Chatham’s

Chatham's abilities as a financier in time of peace, when he had never been tried in that capacity? Did Lord Chatham make the peace in 1763?

To the attempt made to transfer the origin of our grievances from the influence of the Crown, to the abandoned selfishness of the electors, he replied, if the Crown had never possessed this exorbitant influence, the electors would have been uncorrupted; and it always appeared to him, that the most effectual method of stemming the torrent of corruption, was by attacking the sources. For his part, he could not admit the truth of the system which had been stated to be Lord Orford's, viz. "That every man had his price." If this was Lord Orford's system, or be it the system of whom it may, he would be bold to pronounce it A DAMNABLE SYSTEM.

And though he bore a part of the reflections thrown upon the opposition, as acting upon the narrow principle of *self*, he would for once speak in praise of that body, and declare that he fully believed the accusation to be ill-founded; and he would further say, that he sincerely hoped this kingdom would never be without an opposition. He here took notice that Mr. Smelt, after bringing the King's person into question, had made several extraordinary assertions concerning him—"that he was the *only* patriot in the kingdom, &c. &c."—"For my part (continued he) I will not flatter the King, I will say nothing of his patriotism." Another of these assertions was, that "to call the King the ser-

vant of the people was a mean idea." Did the gentleman mean to revive the exploded tenet of the *jus divinum*? Or did he mean to deny that all power flowed originally from the people?

Having thus answered the principal arguments and doctrines advanced by Mr. Smelt, he adverted to the petition itself, which he observed was addressed to the *Commons* by the *Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders*; he begged to know if it was intended to petition the House of Lords? To this he saw no objection, and thought it would be right for the Noblemen, at all events, to sign the present petition, as by that means we should commit them, and have them bound by the strongest ties to follow the same line of conduct, if ever they should themselves come into Administration.

Mr. WYVILL then came forward, and begged leave to reply to Mr. Smelt: To his assertion, that it was improper for Parliament, when it had granted an income of 900,000*l.* a year to the Crown, to interfere with the application of the money, he opposed the weight of precedent. In the reign of King William III. an instance of Parliamentary controul occurred, which fully justified the petition, and in some respects was even a stronger case. It happened near the end of that reign, when the nation was at peace, and had begun to recover from the calamitous consequences of the preceding war. At that time the army was suffered to be deep in arrear, and the forfeited lands, instead of having been applied

plied to the public service, were found to have been granted among the favourites of the King. At this misconduct, Parliament was justly offended; a bill for the resumption of those lands was brought in, and soon after passed into a law.— But surely the interference of Parliament at present was more evidently necessary. The nation was engaged in a widely extended and dangerous war; it was distressed by an immense accumulation of debts and taxes, and nothing but the most rigid economy could prevent our ruin.

With respect to Mr. Smelt's panegyric on the King, he would not dispute the propriety of it; but he derived from it some hope of an immediate compliance with the prayer of the petition. A patriot King must esteem himself happy in the opportunity it would afford him to gratify his subjects by redressing their just complaints. He hoped the conduct of the people that day would sufficiently repel the invidious and uncomfortable representation that had been made of them; and that it would appear from their measures, that they had not met to promote the narrow views of a party, but to effect a reformation of great public abuses, and thus secure a lasting benefit to the country. That the petition was a measure well calculated to promote that *constitutional redress* which was become necessary; and that by their concurrence and effectual support of it, they should demonstrate that a considerable portion of public spirit, as well as of private virtue, still remained among them.

He therefore moved, that the question should now be put.

Mr. GOODRICKE desired to have it understood that he most heartily assented to the prayer of the petition, as he believed there is no country on earth in which so much public money is diverted from public purposes into the pockets of individuals; but that while he assented to the prayer, he did not equally assent to all the allegations. He considered, for instance, a declaration that we are an impoverished country, as neither true in itself, as he believed we have still great resources, nor at this time wisely divulged, as it must at one time despirit the people, and give courage to our enemies. He farther urged, that the supplies were already voted, and that the worst consequences must attend the honour of Parliament, and the interest of the country, if in the present state of our affairs a stop should be put to the operations of government till the grievances alledged in the petition should be redressed. He now read a petition, drawn up by himself, upon these principles.

Mr. WYVILL observed upon Mr. Goodricke's last objection, and obviated its force by pointing out that the petition did not make any such extensive demand, and that it only desired effectual measures might be instituted, not carried into instantaneous effect, and this too only before the grant of any additional sums of public money.

The question was now put, and unanimously carried in the affirmative.

NUMBER II.

Paper I.

Letter from W. CHALONER, Esq; Chairman of
the County Meeting, on the 30th of December,
1779, to the MARQUIS of ROCKINGHAM,*

My Lord,

YORK, Dec. 30, 1779.

I Have the honour, as Chairman of the County Meeting held at the Assembly-Rooms in York this day, to transmit to your Lordship the following Resolution of that meeting:

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Lords and Members of the House of Commons present, who honour this petition with their support; and that the committee be directed to insert a copy of this resolution, in the papers, with the names of those Lords and Members of the House of Commons annexed.

It

* A similar letter was sent to the other Peers and Members of the House of Commons, who had attended the meeting.

It is with particular pleasure that I convey this resolution to your Lordship. I am, with the greatest respect and consideration,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's humble servant,

W. CHALONER.

Paper. II.

Letter from the MARQUIS of ROCKINGHAM, to
W. CHALONER, Esq.

Dear Sir,

MY former letter, wrote immediately upon receiving the honour of your letter, conveying the thanks of the meeting, on the 30th of December at York,

Would apprize you, that it was not probable that the Peers, who had been present at the meeting, were likely to be together, till they meet on or about the 8th of this month.

The Duke of Rutland and E. Effingham did not come to London till the night of the 7th. So that indeed this day, was the first time, we had the opportunity of meeting, and settling our

our public letter of thanks for the great honour done to us.

I now inclose to you the answer we have wrote, and I imagine you will forward it, after perusing it, to the Committee, or to the Chairman of the Committee, now sitting at York.

I have only to add, that I am particularly de-
fired by the Peers, who have signed the answer,
to express their sense of the very obliging man-
ner in which you communicated to each of
them, the honour which had been done them.

I beg leave to assure you, that I am, dear Sir,

With great regard,

Your most obedient

And obliged

Humble servant,

ROCKINGHAM.

GROSVENOR-SQUARE,

Wednesday night,

February the 9th, 1780.

Paper III.

our public letter of thanks for the great honour
done to us.

I now inclose to you the answer we have
wrote, and I imagine I have said all that
Paper III.

belonging to the Committee, or to the Chairman
of the Committee, now sitting at York.

**The joint Letter of the Peers who had attended
the County Meeting, in answer to W. Cha-
loner, Esq.**

to express their sense of the very
net in which you communicated to each of
them, the honour which had been done them.
I beg leave to assure you, that I am, dear Sir,

With great regard
Yours most obedt. servt.

To WILLIAM CHALONER, Esq;

**CHAIRMAN of the MEETING of the NOBILITY,
GENTLEMEN, CLERGY, and FREEHOLDERS, of
the County of York, held at York on the 30th
of December, 1779.**

Sir,

WE have received with great pleasure, and
we acknowledge with the utmost gra-
titude, the honour which has been done us by
the Gentlemen and Freeholders lately assem-
bled at York.

As men of property, we can have no well un-
derstood interest but the common interest of the
kingdom, and as *Englishmen*, (who are persuaded
that

that the best part of our interest is our share in the common liberty) we must wish with you to lessen the influence of the Crown, which has not been less mischievous to the Sovereign himself, than destructive to the spirit of the Constitution.

We are happy in knowing that the economy which is necessary to restore vigour to the state, furnishes at the same time the most effectual security to its freedom.—Filled with these sentiments, (which are the last we shall ever relinquish) we gladly take this opportunity of writing our names in testimony of our entire and hearty approbation of the principles, which prevailed at the meeting at York; and you may be assured, Sir, that we shall, in our proper place of trust in the Constitution promote, and ever as Englishmen exert ourselves in support of such laudable endeavours.

The interposition of the body of the people of property in this country in their affairs, is naturally rare; no arts of designing men for their own private purposes can produce it, but while the true character of an *Englishman* is at all kept up in this country, that interposition must happen when it is really called for, and then no artifices can prevent it.

Peers, and the more immediate Representatives of the people, instead of being constrained or superseded in their parliamentary capacity, by such respectable interposition, will be greatly animated

animated and assisted by it, if they mean to do their duty.

We have the honour to be,

With the greatest regard, Sir,

Your most obedient,

And very obliged, humble servants,

DEVONSHIRE,

RUTLAND,

ROCKINGHAM,

EFFINGHAM,

SCARBOROUGH,

EGREMONT,

FITZWILLIAM.

Paper IV.

Letter from W. CHALONER, Esq; to Sir GEORGE SAVILE, Bart.

GUISBROUGH, by North Allerton, Jan. 7, 1780.

Sir,

I Have the honour, as Chairman of the County Meeting held at the Assembly-Room in York, on the 30th of December, 1779, to transmit to you the following Resolution of that meeting.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Lords and Members of the House
of

of Commons present, who honoured this petition with their support; and that the Committee be directed to insert a copy of this Resolution in the papers, with the names of those Lords and Members of the House of Commons annexed.

Another Resolution was voted which I am sorry to find is not in the printed account of the proceedings, viz. Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to Sir George Savile, Bart. for his speech.

It is with particular pleasure that I convey these resolutions to you, and I am with the greatest esteem and respect, Sir,

Your humble servant,

W. CHALONER.

Paper V.

Letter from Sir G. SAVILE to W. CHALONER, Esq.

RUFFORD, January 11, 1780.

Sir,

I Had yesterday the honour of receiving your obliging letter of the 7th instant, in which you transmit to me the Resolution of the Meeting held at York, on the 30th of December, respecting the Members of both Houses of Parliament who were present at that meeting.

At

At the same time that I desire to express to you Sir, how sensible I am of the part which falls to my share of this very honourable notice; give me leave to add, that, as the servant of the county, I accept it as a particular mark of favour from my constituents beyond what I had any title to look for or expect.

For the opportunities are so few that the Representative has of communicating with large bodies of his constituents on their most important public concerns: that it would be a strange negligence indeed, not solicitously to embrace every opportunity of knowing their opinions, sentiments, and wishes, respecting great public measures.

But more peculiarly so on such an occasion as this; when not only a very large number of my electors were likely to be assembled; but where the professed object was to call for a reformation of abuses of the most fatal tendency; and at a time too, when (considering the price we have paid) public affairs wear a very melancholy and unpromising aspect.

When therefore a very respectable body, conceiving their properties to be sported with, and lavished to the worst of purposes, called out for some limits to be set to extravagance, and expressed their wishes that the sources of corruption might, at least in some degree, be diminished, it surely would have betrayed a strange forgetfulness of his duty in their Representative,
had

had he not attended and joined in the general voice for the attainment of such an object.

I most heartily wish, nay I will venture to entertain some hope, that the voice of a complaining people will be attended to; and that every beneficial consequence may ensue which the most sanguine can promise themselves from an application so constitutionally and so temperately made.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest regard,

Sir, your much obliged,

Most obedient, humble servant,

G. SAVILE.

Paper VI.

Letter from W. CHALONER, Esq; to the Rev.

C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

ON looking over the list of the letters I wrote, as Chairman of the County Meeting, I find I have been guilty of a very gross neglect in not transmitting to you the thanks of the meeting; this, I flatter myself, you will not impute to any intentional omission on my part: I have how-

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ever

ever now, though late, the satisfaction to assure you that, I believe, the meeting was not more unanimous in the vote for the petition, than in the vote of thanks to the Worthy Planner and Supporter of it.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

W. CHALONER.

Paper VII.

Resolutions at a Meeting, on the 31st of December, 1779, of the Committee, appointed by the General Meeting of the County of York, on the 30th of December, 1779.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir Robert Hildyard
Rev. William Cayley
Sir James Norcliffe
Rev. John Bourne
Mr. Hildyard
Mr. Pool
Mr. Smyth of Heath
Mr. Smith of Newland
Rev. Henry Zouch
Mr. Dring
Sir Watts Horton
Mr. Foljambe
Mr. Edmunds
Rev. William Mason
Mr. Tooker
Mr. Hill

Mr. Ward
General Hale
Mr. Chaloner
Mr. Withers
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Smith, New-Buildings
Mr. Strickland
Mr. Jackson
Rev. John Robinson
Rev. Frederick Dodsworth
Mr. Ellsey
Rev. John Michell
Sir W. Milner
Mr. Thornton
Rev. William Dealtry

Resolved, That the expences which may be incurred in circulating the Petition and carrying it before the House of Commons, be defrayed by this Committee, and such other gentlemen of this county as may voluntarily contribute thereto.

Resolved, That ten engrossed copies of the petition be circulated in the West-Riding, six in the North-Riding, four in the East-Riding, and two for the city of York and the ainsty, to be signed by the freeholders.

Resolved, That every freeholder, who signs the petition, shall annex to his name the freehold which entitles him to sign.

Resolved, That the Committee shall meet once a fortnight, at the hour of eleven, at the York-Tavern; and that notice be given in the news-papers, that this Committee will meet on Friday the 14th of January, 1780.

Resolved, That the above Resolutions be printed in the York news-papers.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

*Paper VIII.***Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of the
County of York, on the 14th of January, 1780.****PRESENT,****Rev. WILLIAM MASON, Chairman****Rev. William Dealtry****Mr. St. Quintin****Mr. Croft****Mr. Dring****Mr. H. Thompson****Mr. Elfrey****Mr. F. Smith****Rev. W. Comber****Sir James Noreliffe****Mr. Strickland of Boynton****Rev. John Robinson****Mr. Baynes****Sir William Milner****Mr. Croft, jun.**

**Resolved, That the following letters be sent to
the several gentlemen to whom they are directed,**

YORK-TAVERN, JAN. 24, 1780.**Sir,**

IT having been mentioned to the Committee, this day, that the copy of the petition sent to Beverley is not in proper hands, and hitherto remains unsigned: the Committee have desired me to write to you, as a friend to the cause in which we are embarked, to request that you would take the petition under your protection, and promote the signing of it as far as in your power.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.**WM. MASON, Chairman.****To JOHN COURTNEY, Esq; Beverley.**

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 14, 1780.
Dear Sir,

I HAVE communicated the contents of your two letters, received this morning, to the Committee now sitting; and it is their request that you would present their respects to Sir George Savile, and desire him to give you his opinion as to the most proper time of presenting the petition to the House.

Please to favour me with a letter, directed to me in the Minster-yard, as soon as possible, on this subject.

Your's, in great haste,

WM. MASON, Chairman.

The time of returning your parchment hither, you will please to regulate by Sir George's opinion. To F. F. FOLJAMBE, Esq; at Sir G. Savile's.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 14, 1780.
Sir,

THE Committee being informed that Sir J. Legard has left the country, to whom the petition was entrusted to be forwarded to Scarborough and the towns adjacent, they request that you, as a well wisher to the cause, would take the petition under your protection, and promote the signing of it as far as in your power.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

W. MASON, Chairman of the Committee
for this day.

P.S. A similar letter is wrote to Mr. Halley and Mr. Maling.

To PLAXTON DICKISON, Esq; Scarbro'.

The same letter, mutatis mutandis, to Mr. Halley and Mr. Maling of Scarborough.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 14, 1780.

Sir,

AS no gentleman of the Committee has declined, and as the number of gentlemen here met does not come up to that of twenty-one, which was the number specified, in the first resolution, to form an acting Committee: I am desired, by those here met, to inform you that they do not think themselves authorized to make any alteration or addition to the names first appointed at the General Meeting.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

W. MASON, Chairman for this day,

P.S. Your question concerning the meaning and extent of the Association, you will find answered in the York Chronicle of to-day, in a letter to the printer, signed "*A Freeholder of Yorkshire.*" Nothing has been done on that business this day for want of numbers.

I am, Sir, &c.

W. MASON.

To J. S. SMYTH, Esq; Newland.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 14, 1780.

Sir,

IT is the sense of the gentlemen here met that, for the reasons you assign, you may postpone sending the petition back till you have got as many signatures as you can; unless you hear to the contrary from the Committee, who are not yet resolved what is the most proper time for sending it to their members, but will come to a determination on that point next Friday.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

W. MASON, Chairman for this day.
To Mr. BUCK of Thornhill.

Resolved, That it is not within the power or authority of this Committee to determine the point which Mr. Taylor of Hull has consulted us about, in his very sensible letter of January 1780. We can only declare it as our opinion that a petition similar to ours, signed by such gentlemen, copyholders, merchants, and substantial tradesmen, not freeholders, and attached to the general one, would be very serviceable to the common cause.

Resolved, That the Chairman of this Committee transmit the above resolution, by the first post, to Mr. Taylor of Hull.

Resolved, That the next meeting of the Committee be held at the York-Tavern, on Friday

the 21st instant, at eleven o'clock in the morning, when the members are desired to attend on special business; and that the Chairman transmit a copy of this resolution to all the members not present this day.

Resolved, That though the gentlemen present at the meeting of the Committee this day judged it expedient, for the public service, that they should proceed to business, yet, as their number is less than twenty-one, they hereby declare their acts of this day to be subject to the controul and revision of the next full Committee.

W. MASON, Chairman,

Paper IX.

Letter to the COMMITTEE of the County of York from JAMES TOWNSEND, Esq; Chairman of the Committee of the County of Middlesex.

BRUCE CASTLE, Jan. 24, 1780.

Sir,

BY the publication I have the honour to inclose, you will perceive, and I trust with satisfaction, that the Freeholders of Middlesex at their meeting most readily accepted, for the model of their measures, the very judicious plan adopted

adopted by the county of York; and it is with pleasure, that by the direction of the Committee for this county, I now open a correspondence with you, Sir, as Chairman of the York Committee.

In this early stage of these meetings, complete propositions cannot be expected: Inquiry and deliberation will probably, at present, employ the several Committees of counties throughout England; it is therefore only necessary for me to assure you that the Committee for this county will be at all times very happy to communicate with the York Committee by correspondence, and personal intercourse by deputation, whenever either may be deemed advantageous for the public.

I am, Sir,

With great respect,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

JAMES TOWNSEND,

To WILLIAM CHALONER, Esq.

Resolutions

Paper X.

HACKNEY, Jan. 7, 1780.

PROCEEDINGS

AT a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Freeholders of the County of Middlesex, held here this day, in pursuance of an advertisement from the Sheriff.

JAMES TOWNSEND, Esq; was voted to the Chair:—After which a motion was made and seconded, and the question being put, it was resolved *nem. con.*

THAT a Petition, similar to that from the county of York, be presented to the House of Commons by the Representatives in Parliament for this county.

The petition was afterwards produced, read, and unanimously agreed to.

It was likewise farther resolved *nem. con.*

THAT this meeting do approve of a National Association, on legal and constitutional grounds, to promote a reform in the expenditure of public money; to reduce all exorbitant emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure places and

and unmerited pensions; and to restore and secure to the people the freedom and independence of Parliament, as indispensably necessary to the welfare of the State.

Resolved nem. con. That a Committee of fifty-three gentlemen be appointed to carry on the necessary correspondence for effectually carrying on the object of the petition, and to propose a plan for an Association on legal and constitutional grounds, to support that laudable reform, and such other measures as may conduce to restore the freedom of Parliament. To be presented by the Chairman of the Committee to this meeting, to be held by adjournment, at Free Mason's Tavern, on Tuesday the 11th of April next.

The following motions were then severally made, the question put and agreed to unanimously.

Resolved, That it is the sense of this meeting, that such members of both Houses of Parliament as have done justice to their country by suggesting and supporting the above necessary measure, and shall continue to support the same by giving that unequivocal proof of their sincere attachments to the welfare and interests of the people, are highly deserving the public gratitude and affection; thereby establishing the most solid claim to the applause and confidence of their country, and ensuring to themselves the ready concurrence and effectual co-operation of the freeholders of this country.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the following noble peers, who have honoured it with their presence and support: His Grace the Duke of Portland, Earl Harcourt, Lord Craven, and Lord Beaulieu.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the worthy Sheriffs, for their ready attention to the wishes of the freeholders, in assembling the county.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Chairman.

Resolved, That this meeting stand adjourned to Tuesday the 11th of April next, to be then held at Free Mason's Tavern, Great Queen-street, JAMES TOWNSEND, Chairman.

Paper XI.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of the County of York, on the 21st of January, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. O. WYVILL, Chairman.	Mr. Elzey
Mr. Strickland of Boynton	Mr. Hildyard
Mr. Dring	Mr. H. Duncombe
Mr. Croft	Mr. Dalton
Mr. S. Croft, jun.	Mr. Barlow
Rev. J. Robinson	Mr. Wentworth
Mr. H. Thompson	General Hale
Rev. W. Dealtry	Mr. St. Quintin
Sir James Norcliffe	Mr. Morris
Rev. William Mason	Dean of York
Sir William Milner	

Mr.

Mr. J. S. Smith
 Mr. F. Smyth
 Rev. J. Bourne
 Mr. Poljamie
 Rev. James Wilkinson

Mr. Alderman Carr
 Mr. Chaloner
 Mr. Withers
 Mr. St. A. Ward
 Mr. Marriott

Resolved, That this Committee doth approve the proceedings of the thirteen Members of the Committee on Friday the 14th of January, and doth confirm the same.

Resolved, That the Chairman of this Committee, Mr. H. Duncombe, Mr. Strickland of Boynton, Mr. Withers, Rev. Mr. Mason, Mr. Chaloner, Mr. Hildyard, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Smith of Newland, be desired to draw up an explanatory paper, to be published in the York newspapers as soon as the petition has been presented to Parliament, explaining the principal propositions of the plan of association now under consideration of this Committee, to be presented to the general meeting of the county on Easter Tuesday next ensuing; and to draw up an answer to the letter received from James Townsend, Esq; Chairman of the Committee of Middlesex; and to Sir G. Savile, and Edwin Lascelles, Esq; and to communicate the thanks of this Committee to the Chairman of the meetings of Middlesex and Hertford, and the Lord Mayor of the city of York.

Resolved, That a Committee of correspondence, consisting of such gentlemen of this Committee as reside in and near York, be established to prepare answers to letters which may
 be

be received during the adjournment of this Committee, in order to be laid before this Committee at their next meeting; and that those gentlemen be requested in the mean time to acknowledge the receipt of such letters, and also to take such measures as they may judge proper to promote the circulation and success of the petition.

Resolved, That Sir G. Savile, and Edwin Lafcelles, Esq; be requested to present the petition to Parliament.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Sub-Committee of gentlemen residing in and near York, to give notice in the York papers, when the several copies of the petition are to be sent back to York, in order to be connected together and transmitted to Sir George Savile as soon as the answer of Sir G. Savile is received what will be the proper time for presenting the petition to Parliament.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be returned to the freeholders of the counties of Middlesex and Hertford, and the Lord Mayor and Commonalty of the city of York, for their support of the constitutional plan of the petition of this county, and for the additional honour of having adopted the very terms of their petition.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to James Townsend, Esq; Chairman of the meeting for the county of Middlesex.

Sir,

A Committee of Freeholders of so extensive a county as Yorkshire, and that selected out of a numerous body from their distinct three Ridings, is not easily called together at the moment, and at this inclement season was impracticable, otherwise, on the early information of the public papers, concerning the late proceedings of the county of Middlesex, a letter from this Committee would have been written (some posts before they had an opportunity of opening yours) to express the very high sense they have of the honour done to them by so important a body of men; in not only adopting the measures, but the very terms of their petition. The Committee met on this day, after directing me to communicate these their unanimous sentiments on this occasion, have further ordered me to acquaint you, that the resolutions of the Committee this day, will be communicated to you in a few posts, and that they shall be happy to enter into a correspondence, and to receive the further communication of your ideas on the great national object we are jointly engaged in, either by deputation or otherwise, as occasion may mutually dictate.

I have the honour to be, &c.

C. WYVILL,

Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to George Jennings, Esq; Chairman of the county meeting held at Hertford.

Sir,

The Committee assembled this day at York cannot help observing, with great satisfaction, that the respectable county of Hertford have not only adopted the measures resolved upon at the Yorkshire meeting, but also the very terms of their petition. They beg leave to express their very high sense of the honour done them by this resolution, and to declare their opinion of the good effects which may flow from a conformity of sentiments and language upon the great constitutional questions, in the several applications made to Parliament by the counties and corporations of this kingdom. The Committee have farther directed me to acquaint you, that they shall be happy to enter into a correspondence with the Committee of the county of Hertford, and to receive the communication of their ideas on the great national object we are jointly engaged in.

I have the honour, &c.

C. WYVILL,

Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of York.

My Lord,

THE Gentlemen of the Committee of the county of York, being this day assembled, beg leave to express their sense of the high honour conferred on them by the city of York, in adopting not only the measure, but the very terms of the county petition. They are very happy to have the concurrence of that ancient city, in a matter of so great national concern; and will at any time communicate to your Lordship, or any person authorized by the Corporation, any further measures that may be hereafter agreed upon by the county, for more effectually promoting the laudable reform.

I have the honour to be, &c.

C. WYVILL,

Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to Sir George Savile.

Sir,

THE Committee appointed by the General County Meeting, held at the Assembly-Rooms in York, on the 30th day of December last, have authorized and directed me to communicate to you their unanimous request, that you will, in conjunction with Edwin Lascelles, Esq; be so good as to undertake to pre-

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sent to the House of Commons the petition agreed upon at that meeting, and since approved by the signature of a great number of other freeholders, your constituents.

I have the honour to be, &c.

C. WYVILL,

Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to Mr. Lascelles.

Sir,

ALTHOUGH the Committee have not received the honour from you that Sir Geo. Savile has conferred upon them, in answering their Chairman, Mr. Chaloner's letter, communicating their resolutions of the 30th of December, yet, they think it their indispensable duty to request that you (as one of the Representatives of the county) will be pleased to present their petition.

I have the honour to be, &c.

C. WYVILL,

Chairman of the Committee.

Resolved, That certain heads of an Association read this day, be referred to the future consideration of this Committee, on Saturday the 25th of March, as containing propositions on which a plan may be prepared, proper to be presented to the general meeting on Easter-Tuesday.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following heads of an Association, read this day, be printed and communicated to the Members of the Committee.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 21, 1780.

The Committee of sixty-one gentlemen, appointed by a resolution of the general meeting of this county, held on the 30th day of December 1779, having this day taken into their serious consideration the trust reposed in them by the general meeting, do profess and declare to the public that they conceive an effectual reform in the expenditure of public money, and other measures tending to restore the freedom of Parliament, can only be expected from the unanimous application and support of independent men throughout the kingdom; and they think it their duty to explain to the public, that a plan for uniting the independent part of this county in a legal and constitutional Association to support the object of the petition, and to promote regulations for shortening the duration of Parliaments, and for obtaining a more equal representation of the people, hath been submitted to the consideration of this Committee. And it was proposed that the application for those salutary regulations be supported in a legal and pacific way, by engaging not to vote for any candidate at any future election for this county, or any other county or place in Parlia-

ment, who shall not first have made a public promise, signed with his name, in the words, or to the effect following, viz.

“I, A. B. do promise and engage, on the
 “word of a man of honour, that I will sup-
 “port the propositions for enquiring into and
 “correcting the gross abuses in the expendi-
 “ture of public money, for shortening the
 “duration of Parliaments, and for obtaining
 “a more equal representation of the people
 “in a parliamentary way, to the utmost of
 “my power.”

And we declare farther, that we conceive this plan contains propositions on which a proper form of Association for promoting those constitutional improvements may be framed, and that the propriety of submitting those propositions, with the necessary amendments to the general meeting on Easter Tuesday, will be considered by this Committee on Saturday the 25th of March next.

Resolved, That this meeting be adjourned to Friday the 11th day of February next.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper XII,

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee
of the County of York, on the 24th of January,
1780.*

PRESENT,

W. STRICKLAND, Esq; Chairman.

Mr. Croft

Mr. F. Smyth

Rev. John Robinson

Mr. Withers

Mr. Hill

Mr. Dring

Resolved, That the following letter be written
to Tho. Leach, Esq; of Townhill, near Bradford.

Sir,

THE Committee of correspondence,
appointed by the County Committee of sixty-
one, assembled here on Friday last, have directed
me to return you thanks, in their names, for
the very active zeal you have shewn in support
of the County Petition; and they hold them-
selves very singularly obliged to you for having
procured a duplicate of the petition, and offered
it to the freeholders in your neighbourhood to
sign. The gentlemen of this Committee finding
great industry has been exerted in different parts
of the county, by the interested enemies of the
petition, to prevent its getting a numerous sig-

nature, are the more sensible of the favour you have done them.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

WM. STRICKLAND, Chairman
for the day.

Resolved, That the following letter be wrote to Sir William Milner.

YORK, Jan. 24, 1780.

Sir,

HAVING received information that there are several places, and particularly below Selby, at which the Petition has not been, owing to Mr. Pritchard having left the country: The gentlemen of the Sub-Committee, met this day, request you to forward the Petition to what places you think proper, for the more effectually presenting the Petition to every freeholder.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient

Humble servant,

WM. STRICKLAND of Boynton,
Chairman for the day.

P. S. If you think it proper you may send for one of the duplicates lodged with Messrs. Pritchard or Stovin.

Resolved,

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Resolved, That the following letter be sent to Gamaliel Lloyd, Esq; of Leeds.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 24, 1780.

Sir,

THE Committee, for conducting the Yorkshire Petition, had the honour of your letter of the 20th instant, and think the public and themselves much obliged to you for concurring with them in the virtuous principles they have sent forward into the world. They are very glad to hear that you have entered so far into the spirit of the measure as to form a Club for the better carrying it into execution, and think that a correspondence with your friends in the great towns of Manchester, Liverpool, Nottingham, Norwich, Birmingham, Exeter, &c. as you propose must have a good effect, as example is always the best method of recommending, and we are sure, that by the specimen before us, our Petition and its probable consequences cannot be better enforced than by yourself. We should have been happy to have given you the satisfaction you desire in regard to the question, "Whether it is proposed to make any effort *this Session* in favour of short Parliaments."—No such question has here been agitated, but will be a subject for future deliberations.

I am, Sir, &c.

WM. STRICKLAND, Chairman
for the day.

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Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to Granville Sharp, Esq.

Sir,

THE Committee of sixty-one, appointed to conduct the Yorkshire Petition, have requested me to return you their sincere thanks for the distinguished mark of favour you have conferred upon them, in offering to their deliberations a publication founded upon such truly patriotic and constitutional principles; * and are equally flattered by your countenance and concurrence in the measure they have undertaken,

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient

And humble servant,

WM. STRICKLAND, Chairman
for the day.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to Sir William Anderson, Bart.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 24, 1780.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee, appointed by the Committee of sixty-one, assembled here on Friday

* The publication here alluded to, was entitled "A Defence of the Antient, Legal, and Constitutional Right of the People, to elect Representatives for every Session of Parliament, viz. Not only 'every year once,' but also 'more often if need be,' as expressly required in the Old Statute, and confirmed by the general usage of antient times, demonstrated by the evidence of the Original Writs for Election: In a Letter to a Member of the Surrey Committee."

Friday last, have directed me to inform you they have received the duplicate of the Petition which was sent to be circulated, under your care and protection, among the freeholders in Pocklington and that neighbourhood; and return you their sincere thanks for the zeal and activity you have exerted in promoting so laudable and constitutional an undertaking.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient

Humble servant,

WM. STRICKLAND, Chairman
for the day.

Letters similar to the above were also sent, at this time, to Sir Joseph Pennington, Bart. Stephen Croft, jun. Esq; Rev. William Cayley, and soon after this to J. Dixon, Esq; J. Grimston, Esq; F. F. Foljambe, Esq; Sir W. Milner, Bart. Mr. Weddell and Mr. Morley, Selby, Rev. W. Comber, S. Tooker, Esq; Charles Pool, Esq; J. S. Morritt, Esq; Sheldon Cradock, Esq; R. D. Hildyard, Esq; J. Mathews, Esq; Pemberton Milnes, Esq; St. Andrew Ward, Esq; Sir James Norcliffe, Bart. W. Walker, Esq; W. Chaloner, Esq; W. Strickland, Esq; J. Courtney, Esq; Mr. W. Simpson, J. Linskill, Esq; R. Athorpe Athorpe, Esq; H. Duncombe, Esq; Thomas Hayes, Esq; J. Coghill, Esq; T. Sayer, Esq; Dr. Hulme, W. Baynes, Esq; Walter Hawkefworth, Esq; Rev. C. Wyvill, F. Maude, Esq; John Dalton, Esq; T. Maling,

Maling, Esq; J. Smith of Heath, Esq; Rev. John Bourne, Plaxton Dickinson, Esq; J. Halley, Esq; Rev. F. Dodsworth, Rev. Benj. Walker, Sam. Buck, Esq; Richard Wilson, Esq; J. Stovin, Esq; F. Edmunds, Esq; R. Wilson of Pontefract, Esq; T. Wilson of Leeds, Esq; Ralph Jackson, Esq; William Wilson, Esq.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to W. B. Borwick, Esq; of Gray's-Inn.

YORK-TAVERN, Jan. 24, 1780.

Sir,

I AM desired by the Sub-Committee, appointed by the County Committee of sixty-one, to beg the favour of you to get the Petition of this county transcribed on a skin of parchment, and cause an advertisement to be inserted in such of the London papers as you judge proper, giving notice that a duplicate of the Yorkshire Petition lyes at your Chambers, on such days, (the fixing of which is left to you) and will lye at the King's-Arms-Tavern, Cornhill, and at at the West-end of the town, (which is also left to you) for the convenience of such freeholders of the county of York as choose to sign their names.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

WM. STRICKLAND of Boynton,
Chairman for the day.

Paper XIII. Re.

Paper XIII.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee
of the County of York, on the 28th of January,
1780.*

PRESENT,

FRANCIS SMYTH, Esq; Chairman.	
Mr. Strickland	Rev. William Maſon
Mr. Croft	Mr. Withers
Mr. Dring	Mr. St. Quintin
Rev. John Robinſon	

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to the respective gentlemen who have the charge of the petition in the county,

Sir,

IT is agreed that the Petition shall be sent off, by a special messenger, to London on Friday next. The Sub-Committee therefore this day met, request the favour of you to promote the further signing of it in the best manner you are able, until the middle of next week, and to send your duplicate of it by a *special messenger* hither on Thursday next, directed to Messrs. Graves and Gray, in Petergate, York.

I am, Sir, &c.

F. SMYTH, Chairman for this day.

YORK TAVERN, Jan. 28, 1780.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to James Townsend, Esq; Chairman to the Middlesex Committee,

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee having been directed by the general one at their last meeting on the 21st of January, to do themselves the honour of writing to you, concerning the resolutions taken by them on that day, have resolved (on hearing that the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, the Chairman of the Committee of sixty-one, will be in town on the 1st) to request you to hold a conference with that gentleman on the subject, who is authorised to communicate to you their further views and intentions, concerning the great object of their petition: And they have many reasons to think this will be a better method of consulting with you in the present stage of the business than by letter. If after that conference the Committee of Middlesex wish for any further information, we will answer their next letter as speedily as possible. The Petition of Yorkshire will be in town on Saturday the 5th of February, and it is supposed it will be presented on the Monday following.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Sir, your most humble servant,

F. SMYTH, Chairman
for this day.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the Rev. Mr. Mason be requested to write to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, the resolve of this Sub-Committee relative to the above letter sent to James Townsend, Esq.

Resolved, That the letter lately sent by Sir George Savile to the Committee be published in the next York papers.

F. SMYTH,

Chairman for this day.

Paper XIV.

Letter from Sir ROBERT SMYTH, Bart. Chairman of the Committee of the County of Essex, to the Chairman of the Committee of the County of York.

Sir,

I AM directed, by the Committee, to inform you that at our County Meeting we passed a Resolution, similar to your's at York, for establishing a Committee of Affociation and Correspondence, and beg to have your ideas about it, whether some fixed point in London would not be convenient, as well as less subject to interruption from the post-office, where letters are often stopped and opened. I should be

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glad to have your sentiments upon this matter,
and whether it may not be proper to communi-
cate with other Chairmen of Committees for
the more conveniently establishing such mode
of correspondence.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

ROBERT SMYTH.

Chairman of the Committee of Association
of the County of Essex.

BRECHURCH-HALL, near Colchester,

Jan. 28, 1780.

Paper XV.

Letter from G. JENNINGS, Esq; Chairman of the
Committee of the County of Hertford, to the
Committee of the County of York.

HERTFORD, Jan. 29, 1780.

Sir,

I HAVE communicated your letter
of the 21st of January to the Committee assem-
bled this day at Hertford, who desire me to
express the high value they entertain of the ho-
nour they derive from your correspondence,
and

and assure you they have great satisfaction in having so early followed the example of the respectable county of York: Many other counties having since adopted the same measures; the Committee flatter themselves so perfect a similarity of sentiment and language will produce the most salutary effects.

I am further desired, by the Committee, to acquaint you they are very happy in having opened a correspondence with the county of York, and that they will with pleasure communicate from time to time their ideas on the great national object we have jointly in view.

I have the honour to be,

Sir, your most obedient,

Humble servant,

**GEORGE JENNINGS, Chairman
of the Committee.**

**P.S. When you have any farther commands,
be pleased to direct to me in Portugal-street,
near Grosvenor-square.**

Paper XVI.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee of
the County of York, on the 3d of February, 1780.*

PRESENT,

STEPHEN CROFT, Esq; Chairman for the day.

Rev. Wm. Mason

Rev. J. Robinson

Mr. Strickland

Mr. Barlow

Mr. Driog

Mr. F. Smyth

Rev. Wm. Dealtry

Mr. Withers

Resolved, That the following letter be written
to Sir Robert Smyth, Bart. Chairman of the
Committee for the county of Essex.

YORK TAVERN, Feb. 3, 1780.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee appointed by the
Committee of sixty-one, to answer letters under
certain restrictions and limitations, do inform
you, that they concur in opinion with you as to
the propriety of having some person in London to
consult on business relative to the great object
of the Petition, and as the Chairman (the Rev.
Mr. Wyvill) is now there, they request you to
hold a conference with that gentleman on the
subject, who will communicate to you their
farther views and intentions, as they have many
reasons to think this will be a better method of
consulting you in the present stage of the busi-
ness than by letter. If after that conference the
Committee

Committee of Essex wish for any further information, their next letter shall be answered immediately after the meeting of the General Committee, which will be held on Friday the 11th inst. The Petition of the county of York will be in town on Saturday the 5th, and it is supposed will be presented on the Monday following.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

STEPHEN CROFT.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent to Sir George Oncliphorus Paul, Bart. Chairman of the Committee for Gloucester.

YORK TAVERN, Feb. 3, 1780.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee appointed by the Committee of sixty-one, to answer letters under certain restrictions and limitations, do inform you, they are directed by the Committee to assure you they cannot help observing, with great satisfaction, that the county of Gloucester have not only adopted the measures resolved upon at the Yorkshire meeting, but also the very terms of the Petition. They beg leave to express their very high sense of the honour done them by the resolution, and to declare their opinion of the good effects which may flow from a conformity of sentiments and language upon these great constitutional questions, in the several

ral applications made to Parliament by the counties and corporations of this kingdom.

The Committee have farther directed me to acquaint you, that they shall be happy to enter into a correspondence with the Committee of the county of Gloucester, and to receive the communication of their ideas on the great national object we are jointly engaged in. The Petition of the county of York will be in town on Saturday the 5th inst. and it is supposed will be presented on the Monday following.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Sir, yours, &c. &c.

STEPHEN CROFT.

Similar letters were sent by the Sub-Committee to the Chairmen of the Committees of Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Bedfordshire, Dorsetshire, Berkshire, to the Hon. C. J. Fox, Chairman of the Committee of Westminster, and Mr. Rix, Secretary to the Committee of London, &c. &c.

Resolved, That the following letter be written to George Jennings, Esq; Chairman of the Committee for the county of Hertford.

YORK - TAVERN, Feb. 3, 1780.

Eleven o'clock at night.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee appointed during the adjournment of the General Meeting under certain

certain restrictions and limitations to correspond with other counties, and to promote the object of the Petition, have just now been honoured with your letter in answer to theirs of the 21st of January, and are highly flattered by the cordial concurrence of your county in the measure adopted by theirs. In order to maintain that communication of sentiments which must contribute to our common purposes, and in which we shall esteem ourselves extremely happy, we beg leave to refer you to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, the Chairman of our General Committee, (now at his house in Albermarle-street, London.) A conference with him, we apprehend, will be for the present the most serviceable and satisfactory mode of communicating our further views and intentions, and obtaining the assistance of your judgment in the manner of pursuing them. We are at this moment employed in preparing our Petition for its journey, to-morrow, to the House of Commons, where we hope the signature of about nine thousand names may obtain the ear of our Representatives. I have the honour of being, with the greatest respect,

Sir, your's, &c. &c.

STEPHEN CROFT.

Paper XVII.

Letter from Sir F. VINCENT, Chairman of the Committee of the County of Surrey, to the Committee of the County of York.

UPPER GROSVENOR-STREET, Feb. 3, 1780.

Sir,

AS Chairman of the Committee for the county of Surrey, I have the honour of inclosing an account of the proceedings at Epsom, on the 21st of January, and likewise a copy of the petition and resolutions, which were then unanimously agreed on. I have it likewise in charge from the Committee to request a communication of any plan that may be adopted by the Committee of the county of York; and I shall, from time to time, take the liberty of transmitting to you the result of our inquiries and deliberations.

In the present early stage of this business, a variety of matter cannot be expected to have arisen: But by letters which I have this day received from different parts of the county of Surrey, I have the satisfaction to find that the Petition has been generally signed, and I have every reason to flatter myself, that the great object, we have

have jointly in view, will be obtained by a firm and steady perseverance in constitutional measures. I have the honour to be with great respect, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

FRA. VINCENT.

Paper XVIII.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the County of Surrey,
held at Epsom, on the 21st of January, 1780.*

*To the Hon. the COMMONS of GREAT-BRITAIN
in Parliament assembled.*

The Petition of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and
Freeholders of the County of Surrey.

Sheweth,

That your petitioners in common with others the proprietors of lands, and inhabitants of this kingdom in general, labour under the pressure of new and burthensome taxes year after year, imposed for the purpose of discharging the growing interest of an already enormous, but still accumulating, national debt.

That

That this nation hath been engaged for several years in a most expensive and unfortunate war; that many of our valuable colonies having actually declared themselves independant, have formed a strict confederacy with France and Spain, the inveterate enemies of Great-Britain; that the consequences of these combined misfortunes hath been a large addition to the national debt, a heavy accumulation of taxes, a rapid decline of the trade, manufactures, and land rents of the kingdom, and that your petitioners are justly alarmed at the diminution of the resources of this country, at a time when they feel their burthens daily and grievously increasing.

That they humbly conceive that of the enormous sums levied for the pretended necessities of Government, a much smaller proportion would answer all the purposes of its real exigencies; and that these extraordinary demands upon them are applied to (which they humbly submit therefore as the immediate and visible cause of their present grievances) the support of divers persons, whose emoluments of office are enormous; of divers others possessed of superfluous and unnecessary places; of a numerous list of undeserved pensions, and of many hitherto unexplained and unauthorised services; from which at the same time that an enormous and unconstitutional influence is derived to the Crown: Your petitioners conceive that no adequate

quate benefit accrues to the public, and to the farther maintenance and support of which, under the present diminution of the rents of land owners, and the otherwise impoverished condition of them, and of the inhabitants of the kingdom in general, they find themselves no longer equal.

Your petitioners therefore, sinking as they thus are under burthens every day encreasing, and the alarming consideration of their once ample resources continually diminished, do humbly appeal to and implore the justice of this Honourable House, earnestly entreating them to interpose their authority on so momentous an occasion, (before any further burthens are laid upon this country) by enquiring into and correcting the many flagrant abuses in the expenditure of public money, by a timely reduction of the exorbitant emoluments of many efficient officers of the State, by a total abolition of all unnecessary places, and unmerited pensions, and by applying the produce thereof to the exigencies of the State alone, in such manner as to the wisdom of Parliament shall seem best calculated for the purposes of its future support, and for effectually restoring its ancient dignity and vigour.

Resolved,

That a Committee of fifty-six gentlemen be appointed to carry on the necessary correspondence

dence for effectually promoting the objects of the Petition, and to prepare a plan of Association on legal and constitutional grounds to support that laudable purpose, and such measures as may conduce to restore the freedom of Parliament, to be presented by the Chairman of the Committee to this Meeting, to be held by adjournment on Friday the 14th day of April next, and that any seventeen of them be a Quorum.

Resolved,

That Sir Francis Vincent be empowered to transmit to the Chairman of the York Committee an account of the Resolutions agreed to, and to express the readiness of the Committee to co-operate with such plans as shall be judged necessary to obtain the great objects recommended by their respective petitions.

Resolved,

That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Sheriff for the readiness shewn by him in calling the meeting of the county.

Resolved,

That the thanks of this meeting be given to James Scawen, Esq; and Sir Joseph Mawbey, Bart, Representatives in Parliament for this county, for their steady, upright, and independent conduct in Parliament.

Resolved,

That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Noblemen and Gentlemen, Members of both Houses of Parliament, who attended this meeting.

Resolved,

Resolved,

That the thanks of this meeting be given to
Sir Francis Vincent, Bart. the Chairman.

Paper XIX.

*Letter from the Hon. C. J. Fox, Chairman of the
Committee of the City of Westminster, to the
Committee of the County of York.*

ST. JAMES'S-STREET, Feb. 3, 1730.

Sir,

IN obedience to an order of the
Westminster Committee, I have the honour of
transmitting to you a copy of the proceedings
of the Meeting of the City and Liberties of West-
minster held in Westminster-Hall, on Wednesday
the 2d instant; as also a copy of certain resolu-
tions of the Westminster Committee, met at the
King's Arms Tavern, Palace-yard, on the same
day.

By the last of those resolutions you will per-
ceive how desirous the Committee are of acting
in concert with all other Committees appointed
for purposes similar to those for which they are
themselves instituted.

You

You will give me leave to observe, that if unanimity was a desirable object in the Petitions themselves, it becomes much more necessary in the formation of those plans of Association which the several Committees have been directed to prepare and lay before the adjourned meetings of their respective counties and cities; and that nothing is so likely to produce such an unanimity as a free and unreserved communication of sentiments, either by letter or conference, or both, among those who wish to promote the objects of the petitions. I have the honour to be with the greatest respect.

Sir, your most obedient

and most humble servant,

C. J. FOX, Chairman of the
Westminster Committee.

To the CHAIRMAN of the Yorkshire Committee.

Paper XX.

Paper XX.

*Proceedings at a General Meeting of Inhabitants
of the City of Westminster, on the 2d day of
February, 1780.*

THE Hon. C. J. Fox: being called to the Chair, Mr. Sawbridge made a warm speech, intimating that our complaints are well grounded, and representing the necessity there was for presenting a Petition similar to that of York: He then read the Petition, which was extremely animated. After which it was read by the Chairman, and carried without one dissenting hand.

Mr. WILKES came forward, and in one of the best speeches he ever made, stated the shameful abuse of the public money; said we had been promised a navy superior to that of France and Spain; but it was not long since it had been inferior to that of France only. He said a number of pointed things against the people in power, and expressed his happiness at that spirit of Association which at this period pervades the kingdom.

A motion was then made, that a Committee should be appointed to correspond with the other Committees

Committees through the kingdom; and the Duke of Portland, the Earls Egremont and Temple; the Lords John and George Cavendish; the Hon. Thomas Townshend, Mess. Sawbridge and Wilkes, and about forty other noblemen and gentlemen were appointed of the Committee.

This done, the Chairman made a long and pointed speech. He enumerated some instances of the waste of public treasure; he said, if you ask Ministers what is become of your money, they will not tell you; if you ask them to restore it, they say it is better in their hands than your own. He said the House of Commons received its name from their being the Representatives of the Commons of England, but they gave away the public money without inquiry and without account. He added, that 60,000*l.* had been said to be given to the Indians in America, but if given at all, it was laid out in razors and Jews-harps.

Mr. Fox's speech was very long and remarkably brilliant.

Mr. CHARLES TURNER (Member for York) addressed the meeting, and after giving his opinion of the necessity for an effectual reformation, proposed Mr. Fox as a Candidate for Westminster at the next election; a proposition that was received with loud acclamations.

The Chairman was attended on the Hustings by several Members of both the Houses of Parliament, and of the lower House there were many

many mixed with the crowd, and warm in their applause of the Chairman,

[The Resolutions of the Westminster Committee on the same day, which were also transmitted by Mr. Fox to the Yorkshire Committee, have not been found among their papers or elsewhere.]

Paper XXI.

Answer by the Sub-Committee of the County of York to the Hon. C. J. Fox.

YORK-TAVERN, Feb. 11, 1780.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee, appointed under certain restrictions and limitations to answer letters in the absence of the General-Committee, have this morning received your's, and desired me to return you their thanks for your friendly communication of the proceedings of the Meeting of the City and Liberties of Westminster held in Westminster-hall, on the 2d instant, and also of the resolutions of the Westminster Committee; and to acquaint you that

G

they

they perfectly concur with you in the usefulness, or necessity rather, of unanimity in the formation of some general plan of Association, as well as of the propriety of the different County Committees observing a free and unreserved communication of their sentiments. But in the present stage of the business there are many reasons for requesting you to confer with their Chairman, the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, at his house in Albermarle-street, who is authorized by them to communicate to you their intended plan of Association, as particularly as it can be determined at present; and when the Westminster Committee shall be pleased to communicate any of their sentiments to us, we beg them to do it through the mediation of our Chairman, Mr. Wyvill, who will find perhaps a safer method of conveying their sentiments to us than by the common post.

F. F. FOLJAMBE, Chairman
for this day.

A similar letter was also sent, at this time, to Sir F. Vincent, Chairman of the Committee of the county of Surrey.

Paper XXII.

Paper XXII.

*Letter from the Hon. C. J. Fox, to the Committee
of the County of York.*

Sir,

BY order of the Westminster Committee, I have the honour of transmitting to you the within written Resolution.

The words of Lord Hillsborough alluded to could not be accurately taken down, but the substance of them, as related to us by the most respectable Peers who were present, was calling the Petitions and Petitioners factious; and insinuating, that the promoters of the Committees meant to excite insurrection and rebellion.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

C. J. FOX, Chairman of the
Westminster Committee.

St. JAMES'S-STREET, Feb. 11, 1780.

*Paper XXIII.**Resolution by the Committee of the City of Westminster.*

KING'S ARMS TAVERN, Palace-yard, Feb. 9, 1780.

IT having been stated and ascertained to the Committee that the Earl of Hillsborough, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, did, in a debate on the motion of Lord Shelburne, in the House of Peers on Tuesday the 8th day of February, 1780, misrepresent and traduce the motives of those who have concurred in the appointment of Committees for the purpose of promoting the objects of the Petitions.

Resolved, That any attempt to misrepresent the legal, constitutional, and peaceable efforts of this and other Committees, appointed by the people of England for promoting the just objects of their Petitions, is a gross and unmerited insult on the proceedings and intentions of the Committees and Petitioners in general; and by ascribing the worst motives, unsupported by proof, to all those who have concurred in the said measures, manifestly tends to spread dissension and domestic enmity throughout the kingdom.

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XXIV.

Paper XXIV.

*Answer of the Sub-Committee of the County of
York to the Hon. C. J. Fox.*

YORK-TAVERN, Feb. 15, 1780.

Sir,

THE Gentlemen of the Sub-Committee have been favour'd with yours this day, and will take care that the resolution of the Westminster Committee, relative to Lord Hillsborough, be laid before the Committee at their next meeting for their deliberation.

The Sub-Committee beg leave to return you their thanks for your early information of the above proceedings, and flatter themselves so just and laudable a resolution will be unanimously confirmed by the General Committee.

I am, Sir,

With great respect, &c. &c. &c.

J. ROBINSON, Chairman
for the day.

Paper XXV.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee of
the County of York, on the 24th of February, 1780.*

PRESENT,

HENRY THOMPSON, Esq; Chairman.

Mr. Croft, jun.

Mr. Smyth

Mr. Croft

Mr. Dring

Dean of York

Rev. William Cayley

Having this day received a letter from the
Rev. Mr. Wyvill, Chairman of our General
Committee, in the following words, (directed
to Stephen Croft, Esq;)

ALDERMARLE-STREET, Feb. 21, 1780.

Dear Sir,

IT appears to me most advisable to
publish the paper of which each Member of the
Committee had two copies. I speak in this
manner because you say my letters have been
opened; but I think you will readily under-
stand my meaning. Among other reasons for
publishing now I will mention this, that, in fact,
the Ministry have got possession of the paper,
by some means or other. We shall not publish
it here till it has appeared in your York papers,
and wish the Gentlemen of the Sub-Committee
to consider whether it will not have a better
effect

effect by appearing signed by all the Gentlemen who signed it in the book. As it runs through out in the declaratory file, I would desire you to print it with such a title as this—

"DECLARATION"

"BY THE

"YORKSHIRE COMMITTEE."

I shall wait your answer by return of the post, or as soon as possible, and then insert it in all the Evening Papers.

I am, dear Sir, with great respect,

Yours very faithfully,

C. WYVILL.

Resolved, That the paper therein referred to, being the same paper which is before enter'd in this book on the 21st of January last, be immediately printed in the two York papers, with the names of all the gentlemen who signed the same.

Resolved, That a printed copy of the said paper, together with the following letter, be transmitted to the Chairman of the several petitioning counties, cities, and corporations.

Sir,

BY the order of the Sub-Committee, appointed by the Committee of sixty-one, I have

the honour of transmitting to you the inclosed printed paper,—and am, Sir, &c.
 Resolved, That Stephen Croft, Esq; be desired to write to Mr. Wyvill, to inform him of the proceedings of this day.

HENRY THOMPSON, Chairman
 for the day.

Paper XXVI.

*Letter to the Committee of the County of York
 from the Hon. C. J. Fox.*

Sir,

IN compliance with the prayer of the several petitions, Sir George Savile yesterday moved for a list of the pensions. Lord North moved an amendment to confine the motion solely to such pensions as are paid at the Exchequer, which make a very trifling part of the enormous list. The House, after a long debate, divided, and there appeared for Lord North's amendment 188, against it 186, so that this important question was lost only by two votes,

votes. Sir George Savile, Mr. Dunning, Mr. Townshend, Mr. Burke, Colonel Barre, and some other gentlemen, exerted themselves with great ability upon the occasion; but the great and uncommon division against the Minister, must be attributed to the spirit which has appeared in the people at large. If such are the effects of your exertions, even in the first instance, I need not say how sure you are of success, if you persevere with steadiness in what you have begun with so much propriety.

I am, Sir,

With great respect,

Your most obedient

And most humble servant,

C. J. FOX, Chairman of the Westminster Committee.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET, Feb. 22, 1780.

Paper XXVII.

**Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee of
the County of York, on the 3d of March, 1780.**

PRESENT,

J. S. MORRITT, Esq; Chairman.

Mr. Croft
Mr. F. Smyth
Rev. J. Robinson
Rev. W. Comber

Mr. Strickland
Mr. St. Quintin
Mr. Thompson

Resolved, That a letter similar to the one written to Sir G. O. Paul, Bart. be written to John Seare, Esq; Chairman of Buckingham, with the following alteration only, after the words—jointly engaged; “for which purpose the Committee have taken the liberty of sending for the consideration of the Committee of Buckingham, Heads of Association liable to such revision, correction, or alteration, as may appear necessary to the meeting of the Deputies from the several Committees to be held in London on March 11.”

I am, Sir,

J. S. MORRITT, Chairman.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be written to J. Awdry, Esq; Chairman of the Wiltshire Committee,

Sir,

WE have already taken the liberty of sending you, for the consideration of the Wiltshire Committee, heads of an Association liable to such revision, correction, or alteration as may appear necessary to the meeting of the Deputies from the several Committees to be held in London on March 11.

JOHN SAWREY MORRITT,
Chairman for this day.

Resolved, That the following letter be written to the Hon. C. J. Fox.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee have this day received your letter, and return thanks for your communication; they entirely coincide with you in opinion, that steadiness alone in our present pursuit can ensure success.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

JOHN SAWREY MORRITT,
Chairman for this day.

*Paper XXVIII.***Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of the
County of York, on the 7th of March, 1780.****PRESENT,****J. S. SMITH, Esq;** Chairman,**Mr. Morrill****Mr. Strickland of Boynton****Mr. Wentworth****Mr. St. Quintin****Mr. Hildyard****Mr. Croft****Mr. Henry Duncombe****Rev. J. Bourne****Rev. Fred. Dodsworth****Mr. Pemb. Milnes****Mr. Thompson****Mr. Eilsley****Mr. Withers****Mr. Marriott****Mr. Dalton****Mr. Smyth****Mr. Croft, jun,****Mr. Tooker****Rev. H. Zouch****Mr. Dring****Rev. W. Cayley****Rev. W. Comber****Rev. J. Robinson****Mr. James Milnes****Mr. Garforth****Mr. Cradock****Mr. Thornton****Mr. Edmunds****Rev. W. Dealtry****Mr. Hill**

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Sir George Savile, Bart. for his steady and unremitted attention to the business of this county, and particularly for the motions made by him in the House of Commons, on the 15th day of February last, "That there be laid before the House, an account of all places for life or lives, whether held by patent or otherwise, specifying the dates of such patents or other instruments by which such places are held

held, the names of the persons who held the same, and the salaries and fees belonging thereto."

And also, "That there be laid before the House, an account of all subsisting pensions granted by the Crown during pleasure or otherwise, specifying the amount of such pensions respectively, and the time when, and the persons to whom such pensions were granted."

Resolved, That this Committee conceiving that such motions were wisely calculated to promote the general object of the Petition of this county, and to restore freedom and independence to Parliament, do sincerely lament, that the production of an account of all subsisting pensions, and the names of the persons to whom the same were paid, has been rejected, and the main design of such motions thereby defeated. And this Committee do declare it to be their unanimous opinion, that unless all necessary accounts and papers be fully and fairly laid before Parliament, there can be no effectual means of correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, or of checking that corrupt and unconstitutional influence of the Crown so justly complained of.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Edmund Burke, Esq; for the very able and salutary plan, submitted by him to the House of Commons on Friday the 11th day of last February, for establishing an economical reform through the different departments
of

of the State; a plan at all times proper, but at this time peculiarly necessary for the welfare of the kingdom.

Resolved, That this Committee do highly approve of the resolution lately passed by the Westminster Committee, animadverting on the very exceptionable expressions made use of by the Earl of Hillsborough, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, on Friday the 8th day of February last, respecting the petitions and petitioners of this country; and are happy to hear that those injurious expressions have been retracted, and hope that such example will be followed by all those who have thrown out the like reflections; and this Committee do declare that any attempt to misrepresent the legal, constitutional, and peaceable efforts of this and any other Committees, appointed by the people of England for promoting the just objects of their petitions, is a gross and unmerited insult on the proceedings and intentions of the Committees and Petitioners in general; and by ascribing the worst motives, unsupported by proof, to all those who have concurred in the said measure, manifestly tends to spread dissention and domestic enmity throughout the kingdom.

Resolved, That the public declaration lately made that nine thousand freeholders are not a majority of freeholders in the county of York, appears to this Committee, from the best authority, to be an assertion not founded in fact, and

to

to have been evidently made with an intent to depreciate the petition of this county, and mislead the people.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Committee, the unanimous concurrence of the independent men of the kingdom is absolutely necessary to maintain a proper plan of Association for promoting the objects of the petitions, and obtaining a national reform; and, therefore, in order to learn the sentiments, and to benefit by the united deliberations, of other Committees on so great and important a subject, this Committee do hereby appoint the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, Sir Robert Hildyard, Bart. and John Sylvester Smith, Esq; to be their Special Deputies, and authorize and request them, or any two of them, to meet the Deputies appointed by the other Committees in London, and to confer with them on a proper plan of Association, on legal and constitutional grounds, for supporting the objects of the Petition, and other measures conducive to restore the freedom of parliament; and to report the result of such their joint deliberations to this Committee at their next General Meeting to be holden on Saturday the 25th of March instant.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Earl of Shelburne, for his motion, on the 8th of February, in the House of Lords, respecting an inquiry into the expenditure of public money.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the Resolutions of the Committee of this day be published in the two York papers, with the names of the Committee.

Resolved, That this Committee doth confirm the acts and resolutions of the Committee of the 11th of February last.

J. S. SMITH, Chairman.

Paper XXIX.

Proceedings of the County of Wilts.

DEVIZES,

1780.

AT a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Nobility, Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of Wilts, held here this day, for considering the present situation of Public affairs.

ROBERT COOPER, Esq; the High-Sheriff, in the Chair.

A Petition to the House of Commons (the same as that of the County of York, and also the same as the above one of the County of Somerset) was read after which the following Resolutions were agreed to, viz.

1st, Resolved, That the Petition now read to this Meeting, addressed to the House of Commons,

Commons, and requesting that before any more burthens be laid upon the Country, effectual measures may be taken by that House, to inquire into and correct the gross abuses in the expenditure of Public money; to reduce all exorbitant Emoluments, to rescind and abolish all Sinecure Places, and unmerited Pensions, and to appropriate the produce to the necessities of the State, is approved by this Meeting.

2d, That a Committee of 51 Gentlemen be appointed to carry on the necessary correspondence for effectually promoting the object of the Petition, and to prepare a plan of an Association on Legal and Constitutional grounds, to support that laudable Reform, and to take such other measures as may conduce to restore the Freedom of Parliaments; and the following Gentlemen are accordingly appointed for the said Committee.

ROBERT COOPER, Esq; High-Sheriff of Wilts.

Earl of Abingdon,

—— Radnor,

—— Shelburne,

H. P. Wyndham, of Salisbury,

Peter Bathurst, Esq;

Will. Bowles, Esq;

Rev. Mr. Townsend,

James Awdry,

Rev. Dr. Warnford,

Wm. P. A. Acourt,

Rev. Dr. Harrington,

H. Dawkins,

Lovelace Bigg,

Edward Poor of Tidworth,

Sam. Carr,

Tho. Bythera,

Charles Penruddock,

And. Goddard,

Rich. Smith,

Rich. Sauthby,

Wm. Hussey,

Wm. Henry Bouverie,

Sir Wm. Jones,

James Montague, jun.

Rev. Mr. Pocock,

Wm. Talk,

Robert Ash,

Ed. Horlock Mortimer,

Rev. Dr. Kent,

John Yerbury,

Matt. Humphrys,

Wm. Harding,

Wm.

Wm. Northey,
Rd. Atwood,
Hon. Charles James Fox,
H. Eyre,
Rev. Mr. Bowles,
Ed. Poore of Wedhampton,
Thomas Vilett,
Thomas Browne Colley,
Trist. Hud. Jervoise,

Esmead Edridge,
John Reeve Edridge,
Richard Long,
Gaisford Gibbs,
T. Liddiard,
Rev. Mr. Polhill,
James Sutton,
Thomas Goddard Vilett,
Wm. Dyke, Esq; of Sifincot,

3d, Resolved, That the said Committee meet immediately at the Black Bear Inn, in Devizes, and that any seven or more of them do constitute the said Committee, and that they adjourn as they think proper, and that their proceedings be presented to this Meeting, to be held by adjournment on Tuesday in the Easter week next ensuing.

4th, Thanks to the High-Sheriff for his readiness in calling this Meeting, and for his polite and impartial conduct at it.

5th, Resolved, That this Meeting do adjourn to Tuesday in the Easter Week next ensuing, at the Devizes.

At this Meeting Sir William Jones declared, that none of our grievances would effectually be redressed, till the defects in the Representation were remedied, and that unless this was done, though we might succeed with the present Parliament, yet that a future Parliament might repeal whatever should now be enacted in our favour. A Statute, he said, had been made in King William's time, against Placemen and Pensions, which was repealed on pretence
of

of its being inconvenient in the 4th of Queen Anne. He said there were present at the Meeting some who had formerly been in the Ministry, and might probably be again employed by his Majesty, he therefore, much wished they would come forward and promise the Meeting, to use their utmost influence whenever they should be in office, to obtain redress of those grievances, the reality of which they now seemed so well disposed to admit.

The Earl of Shelburne came forward, and said, he conceived himself called on by the Gentleman near him, he did not know who were to be the King's Ministers, but, whoever they were, he pitied them from his heart.— But having been once of his Majesty's Councils, it might be supposed he would again come into office. That as to the Reform of Representation, our late great Countryman, Lord Chatham, proposed the increase of County Representatives, as some cure for the corruption visible in Parliament, that it was difficult to pledge himself to the mode, but that he was fully ready to declare himself for the idea of rendering Parliament more Free in its Elections, and more Independent in its conduct.

Mr. Fox followed Lord Shelburne, and said, that he came forward though not a Freeholder himself, yet as nearly connected with a great property in the County under his care; that, though much used to Public Speaking, he had
never

never addressed such an Assembly as that then present, for he had never before spoken to an uncorrupt Assembly, &c. &c. With respect to what Sir William Jones had said of promises and engagements from those now in opposition, if it was extended to him he could only declare to the Meeting, that if ever a more ample Representation should be thought on, he should be extremely happy in whatever situation he might be, to promote it, and that he should not be less ready to exert himself for a redress of grievances; but that he would not be understood to pledge himself to support every scheme of Reformation which might be suggested by individuals. He next proceeded to show the great advantages which the People might gain by insisting firmly on their rights and the redress of their grievances; and earnestly exhorted them to consider their own weight and consequence in the state, and repeatedly asserted that it would not be in the power of the best or ablest Minister to make them great and happy, unless they had the spirit to become so. An honourable Gentleman had mentioned the magnanimity of Parliament in relieving Ireland. What was it made Parliament magnanimous in relieving Ireland? It was the magnanimity of the People of Ireland, who were resolved to be relieved, &c. &c.

He concluded, exhorting Constituents diligently to watch the conduct of their Representatives,

tatives, and carefully to enquire into the motives of it; in fine to consider themselves as the guardians of their own Rights, and to entertain a rational distrust of all men in public stations.

The next Meeting 28th of March, 1780, at Devizes, by adjournment, added five other Gentlemen to the Committee, Hon. Bart. Bouverie, Rev. Canon Bowles, Robert John Buxton, Esq; Humphrey Sturt, and William Aldridge Ballard, Esq;

Voted thanks to Lord Pembroke for his speech in the House of Lords, and that the whole of their proceedings in Public Meetings and Committees be forthwith published. Adjourned *sine die*, subject to the call of the Chairman.

The account of the Proceedings of the County of Wilts, in Paper 29, was thought too important to be omitted, although it was not procured, by the assistance of a respectable Gentleman of that County, Benjamin Hobhouse, Esq; till after the paged part of this Volume had been printed.

NUMBER III.

NUMBER III.

Paper I.

Resolution agreed to at a Meeting of Gentlemen, Members of different Committees, but not communicated to the several Committees throughout the kingdom. The exclusion of Members of Parliament from the intended Meeting of Deputies, having soon appeared improper to some of the Gentlemen who had signed the Resolution, and also to other Friends of Political Reformation who had not attended the Meeting.

ST. ALBAN'S TAVERN, Feb. 24, 1780.

Resolved, That the Committees of the several counties, cities, and towns of this kingdom, who have petitioned Parliament for a reform of gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, be requested to depute three Members of their respective Committees, not being Members of either House of Parliament, to meet at the St. Alban's Tavern, on Tuesday the 7th of
H March,

March, at twelve o'clock, to consider of a Plan of Association, on legal and constitutional grounds, for supporting the petitions, and other measures conducing to restore the freedom of Parliament.

C. Wyvill, Chairman
Robert Hildyard,
F. F. Foljambe,
Robert Smith, Chairman of the Committee for Essex.

} Members } of the Committee for Yorkshire,

W. Frankland, Chairman of the General Meeting of the County of Sussex.

Godfrey Webster, junior, Chairman of the Committee for Sussex.

David Parry, Chairman } of the Committee
Anthony Chapman, Member } for Dorsetshire.

James Townsend, Chairman of the Committee for Middlesex.

G. Onesiphorus Paul, Chairman of the General Meeting of the county of Gloucester.

G. Jennings, Chairman of the General Meeting of the county of Hertford.

Francis Vincent, Chairman of the Committee for Surry.

T. Brand Hollis, } Members of the Committee
John Jebb, } for the city of Westminster.

Paper II.

Circular Letter by the Chairmen of the Committees of Six Petitioning Counties, to the several Committees throughout the kingdom.

St. ALBAN'S TAVERN, Feb: 28, 1780.

A General union of those men who have approved of the measure of petitioning Parliament for a reform of the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, being essentially necessary in the present situation of public affairs, the Committee of the of is earnestly requested to depute one, two, or three Members of their Committee to meet at the St. Alban's Tavern, on Saturday the 11th Day of March, at twelve o'clock, to confer with Members of other Committees, upon the most effectual mode of supporting the objects of their Petition on legal and constitutional grounds, and of restoring the due freedom of Parliament; in order to form, and to report to their Committee, such plans of public and constitutional reform as shall meet with the general ap-

probation of the Members deputed from such Committees.

C. WYVILL,
D. PARRY,
G. JENNINGS,
FRA. VINCENT,
G. O. PAUL,
W. FRANKLAND.

It is recommended to each Committee by the under-written gentlemen, Members of the Yorkshire Committee, as being, in their judgement, a proper and adviseable measure to appoint such gentlemen only to be Deputies who are not Members of either House of Parliament.*

C. WYVILL, Chairman of the
Committee of Yorkshire.

ROBERT HILDYARD, } Members of the Com-
W. MASON, } mittee of Yorkshire.

* This recommendation was thought necessary by the three Yorkshire Gentlemen who signed it, not from an indiscriminate distrust of all Members of Parliament, which would have been extremely unjust and absurd, but from their conviction, that measures for restoring our constitution to its ancient purity, ought to originate exclusively with the People. To refer the measures thus concerted to Parliament, was the determination of the popular meetings at this juncture; and at any future crisis the question whether their example ought to be followed will naturally arise. It is much to be wished that the circumstances of the times may then admit a similar decision for adopting the regular course of application to Parliament.

Paper III.

Paper III.

Letter by the Rev. CHRISTOPHER WYVILL, sent with the preceding Circular Letter, and the Heads of an Association, adopted by the Committee of the County of York, on the 21st of January, 1780—inclosed.

ALBERMARLE-STREET, Feb. 29, 1780.

Sir,

THE inclosed request having been unanimously agreed to by six Chairmen of the Committees, for Yorkshire, Suffex, Hertfordshire, &c. assembled yesterday at the St. Alban's Tavern, I take the liberty to request you will communicate it to the Committee for

At the same time I would beg leave to observe, Sir, that the success of the cause in which so many counties and corporations are embarked, will entirely depend on the adoption of some safe and peaceable plan of general support, and the perseverance of the people in that plan with temper, firmness, and unanimity.

The Yorkshire Gentlemen, whose petition has been so highly honoured by the approbation and concurrence of other counties, are anxious

H 3

to

to form their intended Association in conformity to the sentiments of independent men throughout the kingdom. They are ready to unite with such uninfluenced persons, in proposing constitutional improvements, tending to restore the freedom of Parliament, and to support those propositions, and the æconomical reform requested by their petition, by means that may be practicable and efficacious, yet perfectly legal and pacific. By conference with confidential Members, deputed from each Committee, they conceive the out-line of such a plan of Association may be settled to the satisfaction of the petitioning counties. And each county, city, and town, having first associated separately and apart, on grounds which have received the general approbation, the whole body of the petitioners, in due time, may be collected and firmly consolidated in one great National Association. The obvious consequence of which must be certain and compleat success to the constitutional reform proposed by the people.

The inclosed copy of a Resolution agreed to by the Yorkshire Committee, on the 21st of January last,* you will be pleased to consider, as containing nothing more than a rude draught of a Plan of Association, submitted by them to the inspection of other petitioning bodies, and merely proposed as a ground of general consultation,

* It contained the Heads of an Association, for which see page 67.

tation. If any propositions in that plan shall appear inadmissible to the majority of Deputies at the intended meeting, on the 11th of March, I can venture to declare, on the part of the Yorkshire Gentlemen, that, far from being tenacious of their own proposal, they will most readily concur in any other peaceable measures, which may be thought more likely to give effectual support to the Petition of the People, and to restore the freedom and independence of Parliament.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. WYVILL.

Paper IV.

Resolutions at a Meeting of Deputies from the Committees of several Counties, Cities, and Towns, who have Petitioned Parliament for a Redress of Grievances, held at the St. Alban's Tavern on the 11th day of March, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir Robert Hildyard	} Deputies for Yorkshire	Sir Francis Vincent	} Deputies for Surrey
Mr J. S. Smith		Mr Trecothick	
Mr J. Townsend	} Deputies for Middlesex	Ald. Crosby	} Deputies for London
Mr Prescott		Ald. Kirkman	
Rev. Mr Bromley		Mr Holder	
Col. Fitzpatrick	} Deputies for Westminster	Mr Cartwright	} Deputy for the town of Nottingham
Mr T. Grenville			
Mr Brand Hollis			
Mr Frankland	} Deputies for Suffex	Sir W. Guise	} Deputies for Gloucester- shire
Mr Webster		Sir W. Codrington	
Mr Peckham		Mr Barrow	
Mr Jennings	} Deputies for Herts	Lord Mahon	} Deputies for Kent
Mr Baker		Mr Streatfield	
Mr Byde		Rev. Dr. Rycroft	
Dr Jebb	} Deputies for Huntingdon- shire	Mr Parry	} Deputies for Dorsetshire
Mr Thornhill		Mr Chapman	
Mr Seare	} Deputies for Bucking- hamshire	Mr Grieve	} Deputy for Newcastle
Lord Althorpe			

Resolved, That the Rev. C. Wyvill be Chair-
man of this meeting.

Resolved,

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be communicated, by the Chairman, to Gen. Smith and Mr. W. Hartley, for their polite attention to Mr. Wyvill's letter, in favouring this meeting with their assistance this day.

Resolved, That the Deputies from the Committees of the several petitioning counties, cities, and towns, shall vote by Deputations; each Deputation giving one vote.

Resolved, That no person can be allowed to attend in this meeting, as a Deputy from the Committee of any county, city, or town, which has petitioned, or shall petition, Parliament for a redress of grievances, until he shall have produced such proof of his appointment as shall be satisfactory to this meeting.

Resolved, That the Chairman do appoint a Secretary.

Resolved, That this meeting do adjourn to Tuesday next, the 14th of March, at twelve o'clock, at this place.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper V.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of Deputies from the
several Committees adjourned from the St. Al-
ban's Tavern to the Great-Room in King's
Street, on the 14th day of March, 1780.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir Robert Hildyard	Deputies	Lord Mahon	Deputies
Mr J. S. Smith	for	Mr Streatfield	for
	Yorkshire	Rev. Dr. Rycroft	Kent
Col. Fitzpatrick	Deputies	Sir Francis Vincent	Deputies
Mr Grenville	for	Mr Budgen	for
Mr Brand Hollis	Westminster	Mr Trecothick	Surrey
Mr Cartwright	Deputy for	Mr Frankland	Deputies
	the town of	Mr Webster	for
	Nottingham		Suffex
Sir Robert Smyth	Deputies	Mr Parry	Deputies
Mr French Chifwell	for	Mr Chapman	for
	Essex	Mr Walter	Dorsetshire
Sir W. Guise	Deputies	Mr Townsend	Deputies
Sir W. Codrington	for	Mr Prescott	for
Mr Barrow	Gloucester- shire	Rev. Mr Bromley	Middlesex
Mr Seare	Deputies for	Alderman Crosby	Deputies
Lord Althorpe	Buckingham- shire	Alderman Kirkman	for
		Mr Holder	London
Mr Jennings	Deputies for	Mr Thornhill	Deputies for
Mr Baker	Hertfordshire	Dr. Jebb	Huntingdonshire
Mr Chichester	Deputy for	Mr Grieve	Deputy for
	Devonshire		Newcastle

Resolved, That this meeting do recommend
to the several Committees to persevere unre-
mittingly

mittingly in support of the petitions, and of such measures as tend to reduce the unconstitutional influence of the Crown; and for that purpose to unite themselves in a General Association.

Resolved, That this meeting be adjourned to this Room to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock,
C. WYVILL, Chairman,

Paper VI.

Resolutions at a Meeting of Deputies from the several Committees held at the Great-Room in King's-Street, on the 15th day of March, 1780.

P R E S E N T,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir Robert Hildyard	} Deputies for Yorkshire	Mr Prescot	} Deputies for Middlesex
Mr J. S. Smyth		Mr Townsend	
Mr Baker	} Deputies for Hertfordshire	Lord Mahon	} Deputies for Kent
Mr Jennings		Mr Streatfield	
Mr Byde	} Deputies for Buckingham- shire	Rev. Dr Rycroft	} Deputies for Dorsetshire
Lord Althorpe		Mr Walter	
Mr Seare		Mr Chapman	
		Mr Parry	
			Sir W.

Sir W. Guise } Deputies for	Mr Grenville } Deputies
Mr Barrow } Gloucestershire	Col. Fitzpatrick } for
Mr Frankland } Deputies for	Mr Hollis } Westminster
Mr Webster } Suffex	Sir R. Smyth } Deputies for
Mr Thornhill } Deputies for	Mr Chifwell } Essex
Dr Jebb } Huntingdon-	Major Cartwright } Deputy for
	shire } Nottingham
Sir F. Vincent } Deputies	Alderman Crosby } Deputies
Mr Budgen } for	Alderman Kirkman } for
Mr Trecothick } Surrey	Mr Holder } London
Mr Chichester } Deputy for	Mr Tollemache } Deputy for
	Devonshire } Cheshire
Mr Grieve } Deputy for	
	Newcastle

Resolved, That it be recommended to our several Committees, to adopt the following propositions, as parts of their general plan of union and association, and to endeavour to obtain the object of such propositions by application to and under the authority of Parliament.

1. Resolved, That a diligent examination be made into all the branches of the receipt, expenditure, and mode of keeping and passing accounts of public money, in order to obtain the plan of reform requested by the petitions of the people.

2. Resolved, That there be sent to the House of Commons, in addition to the present Representatives of counties, a number of members not less than one hundred, to be chosen, in a due proportion, by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

3. Resolved,

3. Resolved, That the Members of the House of Commons be annually elected to serve in Parliament.

4. Resolved, That it be most earnestly recommended to the freeholders of the different counties, and to the electors of the cities and boroughs throughout the kingdom, to support, at the ensuing General Election, such Candidates to represent them in Parliament, as shall, previous to the election, by signing the Association or otherwise, have satisfied them, that they will support the above important regulations in Parliament, or so much thereof as shall not be obtained in the present Parliament.

Resolved, That a Sub-Committee be appointed in order to digest and form into one plan of union and association, the different resolves of the meeting, and to lay such plan before this meeting on Friday next.

Resolved, That the following persons do compose the said Sub-Committee,—namely, Mr. Wyvill, Lord Mahon, Mr. Baker, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Meeting of Deputies be given to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, the Chairman, for the excellent plan submitted by him this day to the consideration of the meeting.

Adjourned to Friday the 17th instant.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper VII.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of Deputies from the
several Committees, held at the Great-Room in
King's-Street, on the 17th day of March, 1780.*

P R E S E N T,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir R. Hildyard	} Deputies for Yorkshire	Sir R. Smyth	} Deputies for Essex
Mr J. S. Smyth		Mr Chifwell	
Mr W. Baker	} Deputies for Hertfordshire	Mr Baker	} Deputy for Newcastle
Mr Byde		Mr Grieve	
Mr Jennings			
Sir W. Guise	} Deputies for Gloucester- shire	Mr. Townsend	} Deputies for Middlesex
Mr Barrow		Rev. Mr Bromley	
Sir W. Codrington		Col. Fitzpatrick	} Deputies for Westminster
Alderman Crosby	} Deputies for London	Mr Grenville	
Alderman Kirkman		Mr Hollis	
Sir F. Vincent	} Deputies for Surrey	Mr Chichester	} Deputy for Devonshire
Mr Budgen		Mr Peckham	
Mr Trecothick		Mr Frankland	} Deputies for Sussex
Lord Mahon	} Deputies for Kent	Mr Webster	
Mr Streathfield		Mr Cartwright	} Deputy for Nottingham
Rev. Dr. Rycroft			
Mr Parry	} Deputies for Dorsetshire	Lord Althorpe	} Deputies for Buckingham- shire
Mr Chapman		Mr Seare	
Mr Walter			
Dr Jebb	} Deputies for Huntingdon- shire		
Mr. Thornhill			

The Sub-Committee having met in pursuance
of their appointment by this meeting, and taken
into

into their consideration the Plan of Association offered by the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, and weighed the difficulties that may arise from a Plan of Association in any special form of words beyond those stated in our Resolutions, being prescribed by this meeting to the several Committees of the counties, cities, and towns, who have petitioned Parliament for a redress of grievances; and having represented the same to this meeting, a motion was made, and the question being put, it was resolved——

That this meeting will not recommend a Plan of Association in any special form of words beyond those stated in our Resolutions.

Resolved unanimously, That the propriety of adopting the following Resolution, as greatly tending to accelerate the attainment of the objects of the proposed plan of political reformation, be submitted to the respective Committees,

That it be most earnestly recommended to all Members of Parliament, who are friends to the above-mentioned proposed plan of reform, to use their utmost endeavours, in this present Session of Parliament, to obtain the objects of that plan.

That this meeting do adjourn to this Room to-morrow at eleven o'clock.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper VIII.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of Deputies from the
several Committees, held at the Great-Room in
King-Street, on the 18th day of March, 1780.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir R. Hildyard	} Deputies for	Sir Robert Smyth	} Deputies for
Mr J. S. Smith		Mr Chiswell	
	Yorkshire	Mr Baker	Essex
Lord Mahon	} Deputies for	Mr Grenville	} Deputies for
Rev. Dr. Rycroft		Mr Hollis	
Mr Streatfield	Kent	Col. Fitzpatrick	Westminster
Sir Francis Vincent	} Deputies for	Mr Baker	} Deputies for
Mr Budgen		Mr Hyde	
Mr Trecothick	Surry	Mr Jennings	Herts
Mr Chichester	} Deputy for Devonshire	Dr. Jebb	} Deputies for Hunting-
		Mr. Thornhill	
Mr Townsend	} Deputies for		
Rev. Mr Bromley		Mr Cartwright	Deputy for the town of Nottingham
Mr Chapman	} Deputies for	Mr Frankland	} Deputies for
Mr Parry		Mr Peckham	
Mr Walter	Dorsetshire	Mr Webster	Suffex
	} Deputies for		
Sir W. Guise		Lord Althorpe	} Deputies for Buckingham-
Sir W. Codrington	Gloucester-	Mr Seare	
	shire		
Alderman Crosby	} Deputies		
Mr Holder			
	for London		

Resolved, That obtaining a law for taking
the suffrages of the people in such a mode, as to
prevent

prevent both expence in elections; and the operation of undue influence therein, is necessary towards securing the freedom of Parliament.

Resolved, That the above resolution be inserted immediately after the first resolution adopted by this Meeting on Tuesday the 14th of March, and before the resolution for adjournment.

Resolved, That the memorial, formed in this Meeting, be transmitted to the several Committees, as containing reasons for the plan of Association proposed by this Meeting, which we trust will appear satisfactory to those Committees, and that they be severally requested to take such effectual measures, as to them may seem meet, for making the same public through the kingdom.

Resolved, That the said memorial do stand immediately before the first resolution of this Meeting.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Rev. Mr. Bromley, for the memorial, presented by him to this Meeting, most ably justifying the measures recommended by this Meeting to the Committees of the several counties, cities, and towns, who have petitioned Parliament.

Resolved, That one hundred and fifty copies of the report, containing the memorial and the resolutions, be printed under the directions of the Rev. Mr. Bromley and the Secretary.

Resolved, That the letter read by the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, be approved as proper to accompany the report of this deputation.

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Resolved,

Resolved, That this Meeting do adjourn to Monday next at twelve o'clock precisely, to receive the copies of the report.

C. WYVILL.

Paper IX.

Resolutions at a Meeting of Deputies from the several Committees, held at the Great-Room in King's-Street, on the 20th day of March, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir R. Hildyard	}	Deputies for	Dr Barrow	}	Deputy for Gloucester city
Mr J. S. Smyth		Yorkshire			
Rev. Mr Bromley	}	Deputies for	Lord Mahon	}	Deputies for
Mr. Townsend		Middlesex	Rev. Dr. Rycroft		Kent
Lord Althorpe	}	Deputies for Buckingham- shire	Sir W. Codrington	}	Deputies for
Mr Seare			Sir W. Guise		Gloucester county
Mr Chiswell	}	Deputy for	Dr Barrow	}	
		Essex	Mr Walter		Deputies for Dorset
Sir F. Vincent	}	Deputies for	Mr Chapman	}	Deputies for
Mr Trecothick		Surrey	Mr Baker		Herts
Mr Budgen	}	Deputy for	Mr Byde	}	Deputies for Huntingdon
Mr Frankland		Suffex	Mr. Thornhill		
	}	Deputy for	Dr Jebb	}	Deputies for
Mr Cartwright		Nottingham	Alderman Crosby		London
Mr Grenville	}	Deputies for	Alderman Kirkman	}	Deputy for
Col. Fitzpatrick		Westminster	Mr. Holder		Newcastle
Mr Hollis	}		Mr Griève	}	Deputies for Devonshire
			Mr Chichester		
		Mr Fortescue			

A motion having been made and seconded, that an alteration in the Representation of Parliament be not recommended to be made an article of Association, but be recommended to the several petitioning counties as an object greatly deserving consideration, and on which it would be highly proper that the sense of the nation should be known.

The question was put thereupon, whether that motion should pass as the act of the meeting, and negatived by a majority of twelve deputations to five deputations.

Against the motion.

The Deputies for Yorkshire

Kent

Middlesex

Dorsetshire

Essex

Hertfordshire

Surrey

Huntingdonshire

London

Nottinghamtown

Gloucester city

Newcastle

For the motion.

The Deputies for Gloucester
county

Bucks

Devon

Westminster

Sussex

A motion having been made and seconded, that shortening the duration of Parliaments be not recommended, to be made an article of Association, but be recommended to the several petitioning counties as an object greatly deserving consideration, and on which it would be highly proper that the sense of the nation should be known.

The question was put thereupon, whether that motion should pass as the act of the meeting, and negatived by a majority of eleven deputations to six deputations.

Against the motion.
The Deputies for Yorkshire

Kent

Middlesex

Gloucester city

Dorsetshire

Essex

Surrey

Huntingtonshire

London

Nottingham town

Newcastle

For the motion.

The Deputies for Buckingham

shire

Hertfordshire

Devonshire

Westminster

Suffex

Gloucestershire

Resolved, That the clause, offered by Mr. Wyvill, be inserted into, and make part of the circular letter ordered by this Meeting to be annexed to the resolution and memorial from this Meeting.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, our Chairman, for his candid, judicious, and impartial conduct, and that he be requested to communicate the sense this Committee has of their obligations to those gentlemen of the county of York, who first agitated, and have so nobly, firmly, and unremittingly persevered in promoting and carrying into execution, a plan for a reform of those many and gross abuses which have pervaded the whole system of government; and which if not timely checked must unavoidably

end

end in the destruction of the liberties of our country.

Resolved,

That this Meeting having formed propositions for a Plan of Association, to be reported to the several Petitioning Committees; and having thereby executed the trust reposed in them by their constituents—be dissolved.

C. WYVILL.

Paper X, containing the Report of the First Meeting of Deputies, and *Paper XI*, containing the Chairman's Letter which accompanied that Report, were inadvertently omitted to be printed till it was too late to insert them in their proper places here. For *Paper X*, see page 426 of this volume; for *Paper XI*, see page 439.

13 NUMBER IV.

NUMBER IV.

Paper I.

Proceedings at a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, and Freeholders, of the County of Cambridge, held at Cambridge the 25th of March, 1780. The following Petition was read, and unanimously approved, except by one dissentient voice.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great-Britain, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of Cambridge.

Sheweth,

THAT your petitioners do thus publicly declare their entire and zealous approbation of the Legislature of this country, as placed in the free and independent concurrence of King, Lords, and Commons, in preference to every other mode of civil government.

That

That they anxiously wish the blessing of this form of legislation to be continued to their latest posterity in its constitutional purity.

That they seriously apprehend this form of legislation will be essentially vitiated, if not virtually changed, whenever the treasure and offices of the community shall be successfully employed to bring the Representatives of the People under the influence of the Executive Power.

That they conceive a strong tendency to this change, is at present, and has formerly been, too notorious to admit of doubt, or to require proof.

That they consider every system of public administration, carried on by means of Parliamentary corruption, however sanctified by time, precedent, or authority, to be absolutely unjustifiable on every principle of good sense and sound policy—to be as dishonourable to the upright intentions of the Crown, as it is burthensome to the property, and dangerous to the liberties, of the people.

Your petitioners do, therefore, most solemnly apply themselves to the honour, the justice, the integrity, of this honourable House, praying that effectual measures may be taken by this House, to inquire into, and correct any gross abuses in, the expenditure of public money, to reduce all exorbitant emoluments of office, to rescind and abolish all sinecure places and unmerited pensions, and to use all such other constitutional means as

may tend to establish the independence of Parliament on the most lasting foundations,

And your petitioners are the most earnest in this their prayer, because they are of opinion, that no other expedient can equally tend to heal our domestic divisions, to unite the whole nation in the warmest support of his Majesty's person and government, against the unprovoked hostilities of the House of Bourbon, and to put a final period to that primary source of national distress—the American war.

After which the following Resolutions were proposed, and agreed to by a very great majority, viz,

1st. Resolved, That the Petition now read and addressed to the Honourable House of Commons is approved by this Meeting.

2dly. It was then moved, and seconded, that the said Petition be presented to the House of Commons by Sir John Hynde Cotton, and Sir Sampson Gideon, Baronets, the Members for this county. This motion was three times put by the Chairman, and pressed by the gentlemen who supported the Petition, but was each time rejected by a very great majority.

3dly. It was afterwards moved, and seconded, that Crisp Molineux, Esq; of Chippenham, in this county, Member of Parliament for Lynn, be requested to present the said Petition to the House of Commons, which motion was approved by a very great majority.

4thly. A

4thly. A motion was afterwards made, that a Committee of Correspondence and Affociation be appointed by this county, similar to that of Yorkshire and other counties, which motion was resolved in the affirmative by a very great majority.

5thly. Resolved, That a Committee of the following gentlemen be appointed to carry on the necessary correspondence for effectually promoting the object of the Petition, and to prepare a plan of an Affociation, on legal and constitutional grounds, to support that laudable reform, and such other measures as may conduce to restore the freedom of Parliament, to be presented by the Chairman of the Committee, to be held by adjournment at Cambridge on Monday the 10th day of April next: and that the following do compose that Committee.

The Duke of Rutland	James Ross, Esq;
The Duke of Manchester	John R. Huske, Esq;
Lord Besborough	Scarlet Brown, Esq;
Lord Duncannon	J. Martin, Esq;
Lord Robert Manners	Henry Liel, Esq;
Sir Robert Bernard, Bart.	George Jennings, Esq;
Sir Gillis Payne, Bart.	Richard Hagar, Esq;
Crisp Molineux, Esq;	John Mortlock, Esq;
John Wilkes, Esq;	John Purchase, Esq;
Christopher Jefferson, Esq;	Ebenezer Hollick, Esq;
Thomas Panton, Esq;	Ebenezer Hollick, Jun. Esq;
John Goddard, Esq;	The Rev. Mr. Knight
Henry Pointer Stanley, Esq;	The Rev. Mr. Maris
The Rev. Dr. Watton	Samuel Knight, Esq;
Rogers Parker, Esq;	John Forlow, Esq;
John Payne, Esq;	Robert Grinditch, Esq;
Richard Reynolds, Esq;	Pell Akehurst, Esq;
Edmund Rolfe, Esq;	Mr. Richard Forster
Thomas Day, Esq;	Mr. William Hollick
Thomas Brand, Esq;	Mr. John Audley

Mr. Edward

Mr. Edward K. Fordham
Mr. William Nash
Mr. Joshua Finch
Mr. John Anderson
Mr. Hale Wortham
Mr. Nathaniel Wedd

Mr. N. V. Stevens
Mr. Henry Morley
Mr. Edmund Taylor
Mr. William Hayward, and
Mr. William Huffell.

6thly. Resolved, That the said Committee have power to increase their number, and that seven be a quorum to carry on the necessary business.

7thly. Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the yeomen and freeholders of this county, who signed the requisition to the Sheriff, and who, on his refusal, called the present Meeting.

8thly. Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to his Grace the Duke of Rutland, his Grace the Duke of Manchester, Sir Robert Bernard, Bart. Crisp Molineux, Esq; John Wilkes, Esq; and to such other gentlemen as have attended this Meeting in support of the Petition.

9thly. Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to Lord Duncannon, Chairman, for his liberal and impartial conduct at this Meeting.

10thly. Resolved, That the Committee appointed at this Meeting be immediately adjourned to the Rose-Tavern.

DUNCANNON, Chairman
of the Meeting.

Resolutions

Resolutions of the Committee.

1st. Resolved unanimously, by the Committee, That the Duke of Rutland be Chairman of the said Committee.

2d. Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to this day se'nnight, to be then held at the Rose-Tavern in Cambridge, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

RUTLAND, Chairman of the Committee.

Paper II.

* *Principles and Resolutions of the Constitutional Society at Cambridge.*

We declare,
1. That, in our opinion, every individual of mankind is born with a natural right to life, liberty, and property.
2. That the associating of many individuals into one collective body, is for the security, and not for the suppression, of natural rights.

3. That
* Extracted from the minute book of the Society.

3. That the consent of the people is the true origin, and the happiness of all; the only worthy end of civil government.

4. That there is in all States impliedly, and in the British State expressly, a mutual contract between the governors and the governed.

5. That, in the British State, the contracting parties have agreed not to invade each other's rights.

6. That one right of the people of Great-Britain is, to make laws for their own government.

7. That our ancestors, in very remote times, used to make their own laws, and elect their own officers; and that in later times every free man voted for representatives in Parliament, for it was only in the reign of Henry the Sixth that voting was restrained to freeholders of forty shillings a year.

8. That the present state of Parliamentary representation is extremely defective, and ought to be reformed.

9. That the British Constitution of King, Lords, and Commons, is the most perfect theory of government in the world, and may be rendered as perfect in practice, if the House of Commons be so reformed as to be independent on, and uninfluenced by, the other two branches of the legislature.

10. That the House of Commons hath been manifestly under an improper influence from the other two branches of legislature, from which
innumerable

innumerable evils have arisen to the country at large, as well as to the influencing parties themselves; and that unless some wise and effectual measures be speedily taken to restore the independence of that House, by reforming the representation, the country must be overwhelmed in ruin.

Unanimous in these opinions, we declare, that the end we propose to obtain is a **PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.**

The whole House of Parliament consists of King, Lords, and Commons; but our attention is wholly confined to the last, they being the representatives of us.

In order to obtain, as far as lies in us, this desirable end,

We Resolve,

That we will, by such peaceable and constitutional measures as shall appear to us best calculated to answer the end, endeavour to obtain a reform in the representation.

That at all future elections for this county, we will use our endeavours to promote the interest of only such Candidates as shall appear to us most likely to procure a more equal representation in Parliament, and a shortening of its duration.

That we will put the Candidate whom we support to no expence, but will discharge all the expences that may attend our voting, &c. &c. &c.

Paper III.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of the County of York, on the 25th of March, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. G. WYVILL, Chairman.

Mr. Dalton	Mr. Strickland of Boynton
Sir James Nordcliffe	Mr. Chaloner
Rev. William Cayley	Sir William Milner
Mr. Hildyard	Mr. H. Thompson
Dean of York	Mr. St. A. Ward
Mr. Cradock	Rev. William Dealtry
Mr. Smyth of Heath	Rev. John Bourne
Mr. Croft	Mr. J. S. Smith
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. Jackson
Mr. Dring	Rev. Henry Zouch
Rev. William Mason	Mr. Farrer
Mr. H. Duncombe	Mr. Strickland of Beverley
Mr. Morritt	Mr. F. Smyth
Mr. Tooker	Mr. Barlow
General Hale	Rev. John Robinson
Mr. C. St. Quintin	Mr. Hill
Mr. Jackson	Mr. Marriott
Mr. James Milnes	Mr. P. Milnes.
Mr. Edmunds	

Resolved, That the report of the Deputies appointed by this Committee to confer with Deputies from the Committees of other petitioning counties, and to concert a plan of Association, to support the objects of the Petition, and to restore the due freedom of Parliament, be read.

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The report having been read, and the question being put, it was unanimously agreed to, That this Committee will persevere unremittingly in support of the petitions, and of such measures as tend to reduce the unconstitutional influence of the Crown; and for that purpose will recommend it to this county, at its next adjourned meeting, to unite in a general association on legal and constitutional grounds.

Resolved, That the following propositions be adopted by this Committee, as proper to be articles of the proposed association, to be reported to the general meeting of the county, viz.

1. That a diligent examination be made into all the branches of the receipt, expenditure, and mode of keeping and passing accounts of public money, in order to obtain the plan of reform requested by the petitions of the people.

2. That there be sent to the House of Commons, in addition to the present representatives of counties, a number of Members, not less than one hundred, to be chosen, in a due proportion, by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

3. That the Members of the House of Commons be triennially elected to serve in Parliament.

4. That it be most earnestly recommended to the freeholders of the different counties, and to the electors of the cities and boroughs throughout the kingdom, to support, at the ensuing general election, such Candidates to represent them
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in Parliament as shall, previous to the election, by signing the association or otherwise, have satisfied them that they will support the above important regulations in Parliament, or so much thereof as shall not be obtained in the present Parliament.*

Resolved, That obtaining a law for taking the suffrages of the people in such a mode as to prevent both expence in election, and the operation of undue influence therein, is necessary towards securing the freedom of Parliament.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Monday morning next, at ten o'clock.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

* These four propositions were unanimously agreed to, except the second, to which there was one dissentient voice.

Paper IV.

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*Paper IV.**Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of the
County of York, on the 27th of March, 1780.***PRESENT,****Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.**

Mr. Hildyard
 Mr. Strickland of Boynton
 Rev. William Cayley
 Mr. Morritt
 Mr. R. Smyth
 Mr. Edmunds
 Mr. Croft
 Mr. St. A. Ward
 Mr. Dring
 Mr. P. Milnes
 Sir William Milner
 Mr. Chaloner
 Mr. Croft, jun.
 Rev. J. Robinson
 Mr. Henry Duncombe
 Mr. J. S. Smith
 Rev. H. Zouch
 Sir James Norecliffe
 Mr. Jackson
 Mr. Tooker
 Mr. Dalton

Mr. Cradock
 Mr. Farrer
 Mr. St. Quintin
 Mr. James Milnes
 Mr. J. Smyth
 Mr. Strickland of Beverley
 General Hale
 Rev. John Bourne
 Mr. H. Thompson
 Sir Watts Horton
 Rev. William Mason
 Rev. Fred. Dodsworth
 Mr. Duncombe
 Mr. Foljambe
 Mr. Barlow
 Rev. William Dealtry
 Mr. Hill
 The Dean of York
 Mr. Withers
 Rev. W. Comber

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee
 be given to the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, Sir
 Robert Hildyard, and J. S. Smith, Esq; for their
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 judicious,

judicious, wise, and spirited conduct, at the late Meeting of the Deputies.

A Form of Association having been read conformable to the Resolutions agreed to, on the 25th of March, 1780, by this Committee,

A motion was made, and the question being put, it was unanimously resolved——

That a Committee be appointed to take the same into consideration, and to correct it where necessary; but without being empowered to strike out any of the propositions agreed to by this Committee, as proper grounds of the proposed Association; and to report the result of their deliberations to this Committee, at six o'clock this evening.

Resolved, That Mr. H. Duncombe, Mr. Tooker, Rev. Mr. Mason, General Hale, and Mr. J. S. Smith, do compose that Committee.

Resolved, That Mr. Chaloner, Mr. Strickland of Boynton, Mr. Hildyard, and the Rev. Henry Zouch, be appointed to confer with Sir George Savile, and to report the result of their conference to this Committee.

Resolved, That this Committee doth approve a motion to be made at the County Meeting, to the following effect:

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Committee to consider of, and form upon legal and constitutional grounds, a proper plan for detecting and bringing to justice, all persons who, at the ensuing General Election, shall either
give

give or receive bribes for votes for the election of Members to serve in Parliament; and that such plan, when settled and agreed upon, be communicated to, and the adoption of a like plan recommended by the Committee, to all the other petitioning counties.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to six o'clock this evening.

Paper V,

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of the County of York, held by adjournment in the evening of the 27th of March, 1780.

THE Committee appointed to form, and report to this Committee, a proper plan of Association, to be presented to the General Meeting of this county on the 28th of March instant, having laid before this Committee the following Form of Association, viz.

FORM of ASSOCIATION agreed to by the Committee of sixty-one, to be recommended to the General Meeting of the County of York, held on the 28th day of March, 1780.

WHEREAS during the present expensive and unfortunate war,—the trade, manufactures, and

land rents, of this kingdom, have been greatly diminished; the public burthens grievously augmented by the annual imposition of new and additional taxes; the national debt enormously increased, and the undue influence of the Crown extended, to an alarming degree, by these very circumstances which threaten the utter impoverishment of this country. And whereas, in these times of national difficulty and distress, a just redress of grievances can only be expected from a free and uncorrupted Parliament; and measures tending in a legal and peaceful way to restore the freedom of Parliament, cannot effectually be supported but by a general union of independent men throughout the kingdom.

“ We whose names are here-under written considering an oeconomic reformation in the expenditure of public money to be a most essential and necessary measure for restoring the freedom of Parliament :—

“ And considering also that the representation of the people in Parliament is become extremely unequal, insomuch that a great majority of Members is returned by decayed and indigent Boroughs, which are either at the command of the Crown and a few great families, or else open to general venality, whence support in Parliament may be obtained for the measures of any Administration, however ruinous they may be to the great landed and commercial interests of this kingdom, contrary to the true intent and use of the

the institution of Parliament; which unequitable distribution of the right to elect Representatives in Parliament is now a principal cause of our numerous public evils, to which no radical cure is likely to be applied till a more adequate Representation of the People hath been established by law.

And considering further, that when the fund of corruption hath been in some competent degree reduced, and a more equal Representation of the People obtained, more frequent elections might be restored, not only to the great content of the people, but with certain advantage to the honour and integrity of Parliament itself, without the mischievous consequence of exposing independent gentlemen to vexatious contests with the dependents of any Administration."

We do declare our assent to,

1. The æconomical reform requested by the petitions of the people; that plan of strict and rigid frugality now indispensably necessary in every department of the State; that most important regulation for reducing the unconstitutional influence of the Crown.

2. The proposition for obtaining a more equal Representation in Parliament, by the addition of at least one hundred Knights, to be chosen in a due proportion, by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

3. The proposition for Members of the House

of Commons to be elected to serve in Parliament for a term not exceeding three years.

And in order more effectually to promote this laudable plan of Public Reformation, by our joint assistance in a pacific way, we do associate for that express purpose, and we do testify the same by our signatures respectively. And we do resolve jointly and separately to support these regulations to the utmost of our power, by every measure that may be perfectly agreeable to law and the constitution. More particularly we do resolve, and do mutually and most solemnly engage, that until a reasonable reform in the expenditure of public money hath been obtained, and until regulations for returning at least one hundred additional County Members to Parliament, and for shortening the duration of Parliament to a term not exceeding three years, have been established by law, we will support with our votes and interest no Candidate whatsoever at the next General Election, or at any future election, to represent this county, or any other county or place in Parliament, from whose known integrity and attachment to our free constitution, and his assent to these constitutional improvements, declared by signing this Association, or in such other mode as to each Candidate may seem most eligible, we shall not be first fully satisfied that he will give his utmost support in Parliament to the following propositions, or to such part of

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the reform, proposed thereby, as shall not then be accomplished, viz.

1. For one or more bills to correct profusion in the expenditure of public money; to regulate the manner of making all public contracts, and the mode of keeping and passing public accounts; to reduce exorbitant emoluments of office, and to reform the abuses of sinecure places and pensions, unmerited by public service.

2. For a bill to establish greater equality in the Representation of the People in Parliament, by allowing the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain to elect, in due proportion, one hundred Knights at least, in addition to the present number.

3. For a bill to shorten the duration of Parliaments to a term not exceeding three years.

Resolved, (with only one dissentient voice) That the above Form of Association be offered to the General Meeting of this county on the 28th of March.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn.

G. WYVILL.

Paper VI.

*Proceedings at the County Meeting held at York
on the 28th of March, 1780.*

A Motion being made and the question put,
Resolved unanimously, That the form of
Association prepared by the Committee of sixty-
one be now read.

The Form of Association being read, and a
motion being made and the question put,

Resolved unanimously, That this Form of
Association be adopted by this Meeting.

Resolved unanimously, That the Committee
of sixty-one gentlemen, together with Sir Wil-
liam St. Quintin, Sir William Anderson, Mr. T.
Weddell, Dr. Swainston, &c. &c. be a Commit-
tee of Association, and that twenty-one gentle-
men of the Committee, or more, be impowered
to act as a Committee, to add to their number,
and to take such legal and constitutional mea-
sures as to them shall appear most expedient for
promoting the objects of this Association.

Resolved unanimously, That it is the opinion
of this Meeting, that the prosecution of an offen-
sive war in America, is most evidently a measure
which,

which, by employing our great and enormously expensive military operations against the inhabitants of that country, prevents *this* from exerting its united, vigorous, and firm efforts, against the powers of France and Spain, and has no other effect upon America than to continue, and thereby to increase the enmity which has so long and so fatally subsisted betwixt the arms of both, can be productive of no good whatever; but, by preventing conciliation, threatens the accomplishment of the final ruin of the British Empire.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Committee appointed by this Meeting, to consider of, and form upon legal and constitutional grounds, a proper plan for the detecting and bringing to justice all persons who, at the ensuing General Election, shall either give or receive bribes for votes for the election of Members to serve in Parliament; and that such plan, when settled and agreed upon, be communicated to other Associated bodies.

Resolved, That the letter from the Lords to the Chairman of the last General Meeting of the 30th of December, expressing their concurrence with the measures agreed to by that Meeting, be now read.

The letter being read, a motion made, and the question put,

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be communicated by the Chairman to
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the Lords, for their concurrence in these measures expressed by that letter.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to Sir George Savile for his eminently faithful services in Parliament, and particularly for his strenuous support of the petition of this county in the present Session of Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to those Members of Parliament who have honoured this Meeting with their concurrence in the Plan of Association agreed to this day.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, Sir Robert Hildyard, and J. S. Smith, Esq; for their wise, judicious, and spirited conduct at the late Meeting of the Deputies in London.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Chairman.

Resolved, That this Meeting be adjourned, subject to a call by the Committee of Association.

W. CHALONER, Chairman.

Paper VII.

*Substance of the Debate at the Meeting at York
on the 28th of March, 1780.*

THE business of the Meeting was opened by Mr. WYVILL. He observed that at the last Meeting, a petition to Parliament, dictated by the interests of the country and the necessities of the times, had been agreed to: That in order effectually to promote the object of the Petition, a Committee had been established, with directions to prepare a Plan of Association, on legal and constitutional grounds, calculated to support public œconomy, and to effect such other measures as might conduce to restore the freedom of Parliament; that this had been done with great care and deliberation, and was now submitted by the Committee to the superior wisdom of that Assembly.

He then adverted to the objections that had been made to the Association, as being illegal and of a dangerous tendency. Nothing, he observed, was more common than Associations for important purposes or for purposes of little moment. They had heard of Associations for the detection of swindlers; and even of Associations for the preservation

preservation of game, and may not a body of freeholders associate to give their joint votes to check corruption and preserve the constitution. He then appealed first to the Association, entered into by both Houses of Parliament, for the preservation of the constitution in the reign of King William the Third, by protecting the life of that Prince against the Assassination Plot; and then to another more recent Association, proposed in the year 1745 by Archbishop Herring, and adopted by the county of York. That Association, he observed, went farther than this was intended to go, even to the taking up of arms in support of our laws and liberties against a Scotch Rebellion. He then quoted, in support of the legality and innocence of the Association, the opinion of Lord Camden, and other great legal authorities; and as no law had forbidden the freeholders jointly to exercise their right of suffrage in the manner proposed, it was evident, he thought, that it was a measure which they might safely and legally adopt either for the preservation or improvement of the constitution. He then alluded to the Christian Club, established at Shoreham, for the more commodious management of the business of corruption. This, he said, was an Association for a very different purpose, it was a Confederacy formed against the laws and against the constitution: the corruption of Shoreham was general, and it had been justly punished by Parliament, with the disfranchisement

chisement of that town. This, he thought, was a confirmation of the opinion he contended for, as Shoreham was punished, not because it had associated, but because it had associated for an unlawful purpose. Having thus endeavoured to obviate the force of any argument which might be urged against the Association, on the general grounds of danger and illegality; he begged leave to reserve himself to answer particular objections, which any gentleman of that Assembly might advance against the measures proposed in the Plan of Association, and would endeavour to give a distinct reply to each objection as it arose. He then moved that the Plan of Association should be read. After which,

Sir GEORGE SAVILE rose, and acknowledging that it might be remembered that his conduct at the last Meeting was the reverse of what it now was, said that he then kept back as thinking it his duty to wait for the sentiments of his Constituents; and that though called upon at length to speak, he rose with great diffidence and unwillingness. Since that time the situation of this country is much altered, and he now thought that his early appearance might be proper, as what he had to communicate might possibly be of use to direct the deliberations of the Assembly. He then congratulated them upon the uncommon spirit with which the Petition had been supported; on the honour which this great county was universally acknowledged to have done

done itself by taking the lead in so great a national concern; and on the salutary effects which had already been produced by the Petitions.— He then came to the Association: To the increase of County Members he did not particularly object, it might be a good measure. As to triennial Parliaments they were the people's right, and if he knew, which he could not do from the sense of that Room, perhaps not in less than a month or six weeks, that the majority of his Constituents were for them, by that he should think himself obliged to promote triennial Parliaments; as to himself his mind was much a cart blanche upon the subject, he had not formed an opinion about them. However, with these articles in it, he could not sign the Association. He perfectly approved of it for the purpose of reducing the influence of the Crown, by regulating and limiting the expenditure of public money, the enormous extent of which, and the shameful methods of accounting for it, he represented as the great source of the undue influence complained of. In support of this he read from printed papers some very remarkable accounts of the expenditure of public monies, of the army extraordinaries, of the vote of credit for a million, and of the pension list. After some humorous remarks on these papers, he concluded with some observations on the state of the nation, and the ruinous consequences of the war, the

the end of which, to believe Ministers and Ministerial writers, was yet far off.

Mr. HENRY DUNCOMBE succeeded him, he rose to second Mr. Wyvill's motion. He pointed out the dreadful effects of the American war in the ruin both of landlord and tenant, &c. spoke of the Ministry as wicked and desperate, but left them to the judgement of his country. He trusted that the real friends of the nation would now show that they were serious, by exerting every effort to restore the freedom of Parliament. And having drawn a ridiculous picture of Ministerial influence, by describing the events of a single evening in the House of Commons, he sat down.

Mr. SPENCER STANHOPE, (Member for Carlisle) succeeded Mr. Duncombe. He perfectly approved Sir George Savile's idea of the Association; and said he had suffered inexpressible uneasiness from the situation of his mind with regard to it from which the worthy Baronet, by declaring his sentiments on the subject, had relieved him. Instead of an Association he would rather have recommended an Address to the Throne, and deemed it an impossibility that Majesty should turn a deaf ear to the complaints of an insulted people. He then made several observations on Mr. Burke's bill and its success; he ridiculed the idea of an impropriety in examining into the expenditure of the public money, before the abuse of it was certainly proved,

proved. The money granted to his Majesty for the use of the nation was in trust only, was as much his, and every man's, as the King's, and it was nothing unbecoming to inquire into the application of it. He observed with pleasure an increasing minority; dwelt much on the good effects which had already been produced by the petitions, and hoped from them for every thing we wanted. It appeared to him of little moment to obtain triennial Parliaments while the influence of the Crown remained. The adopting such ideas might cause division among those who were united in pursuing the object of the Petition: He urged attention to unanimity, but called for free discussion, and professed himself ready to receive instruction from any quarter. That Associations like this were legal, appeared from the express declaration of the Attorney-General. He objected to some particulars in it, but cordially joined in the attempt to regulate the public expences and reduce the influence of the Crown. He then animadverted on the disgraces of the campaign, but opposed to it our successes at sea: And, speaking of national burdens, he observed that while the house-tax lies heavy, and would lie heavier on London and all the great towns, the tax on malt and salt was directly levelled at the farmer and the cottager, and would soon be felt by them. He concluded by repeating what he had said at the former Meeting, that the King was the Servant of the People,

People, and celebrated it as a great and glorious pre-eminence.

Sir JAMES NORCLIFFE followed Mr. Stanhope; though he had previously chalked out the line he meant to take, he was glad to find that without departing from it he should reply to the objections of the honourable gentleman who had spoken before him. He observed that triennial Parliaments were an infringement upon the constitution, which it was necessary to bring back to its antient establishment; it was necessary not only to restrain and regulate the public expences, but an equal representation must be obtained by addition to the County Members, and by shortening the duration of Parliaments; these measures would improve public credit and bring back public virtue; and by these means in due time, by the impeachment of an independent House of Commons, the traitors of their country might be brought to justice. He strongly urged the support of the Association in the form in which it had been read; and said it was his opinion that though triennial Parliaments were preferable to septennial, annual ones were better than either; that till the antient constitution was restored the liberties of the people stood on a precarious foundation; and he even thought Mr. Burke's regulation of the Royal household necessary to make the King himself free.

Mr. TOOKER, after having stated the care, deliberation, and diligence, which the Committee

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had

had employed to draw up a proper Plan of Association, urged not only the expediency but even the necessity of adopting it. It was universally agreed that the influence of the Crown ought to be limited, and that in fact the influence of the Crown was exerted to destroy the independency of Parliament. By what means was this to be corrected? Notwithstanding all that had been said concerning the good effects of the petitions, and the hope that these suggested, the minority was not two hundred. He urged that if the Association was to be confined merely to the reduction of the influence of the Crown by the regulation of the public expediture, it would be nugatory and ineffectual, by no means such as could serve the wishes of the Petitioners, or satisfy the expectation that had been conceived from the wisdom and temperance of that Assembly, to which all eyes were at this time directed. Other means had proved ineffectual, and afforded no ground of hope. The present Plan of Association unanimously adopted and steadily adhered to, must in the end prove successful.—Nothing was to be expected from the present Parliament, or the present mode of representation. It was needful to guard against the increase of power in the Aristocracy, while the power of the Crown was to be reduced. The present Plan of Association by providing for a body of Independent Representatives, whose integrity could not be doubted,

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by adding to the number of County Members, by shortening the duration of Parliaments, and more frequently bringing back the Representatives to their Constituents, placed the power where the power of Government ought to be, where he wished to see it, where if it was once by such means as these established, he hoped it would remain for ever—IN THE PEOPLE. He spoke to the difficulties which had been stated by the Members of Parliament who had already spoken, with great liberality of sentiment and weight of argument. It gave him pain to differ from so respectable a person as the Hon. Member who had so long represented this county with so much credit to himself and satisfaction to his Constituents, and who had given the Assembly so striking a proof of the necessity there was of some vigorous measures to restrain the influence of the Crown, and to restore the independency of Parliament. He must, however, give it as his opinion, that ineffectual exertions in behalf of Liberty were dangerous and hurtful to its interests, and that if the Plan of Association which had been proposed was deserted, we might date from that day if not the ruin of them, yet at least a more rapid decline in the hopes and interests of British Liberties. On the contrary, if it was unanimously and vigorously adopted as it stood, he trusted that it would in the end prove effectual to redress the

grievances complained of, and to fix the power where the right was—IN THE PEOPLE.

LORD JOHN CAVENDISH rose next: He declared he could not sign the Association. He approved it as a measure taken for diminishing the influence of the Crown, by reducing and regulating the national expence; but he thought the addition of County Members would be attended with great difficulties, and would be better omitted; as tending, in his opinion, to lessen the probability of success to the Petition: And more frequent Elections to Parliament, he thought, would be an injurious change; fewer Independent Men would get into Parliament, they would be unable to support a triennial struggle with the Treasury. Experience, he said, had shown that short Parliaments had been under influence: Long Parliaments had been faithful, and zealous for the rights of the people: Adversity was said to be the best teacher, both of wisdom and virtue; and to have sat long in the House, in a minority whose best measures were uniformly over-ruled, with a majority whose worst measures were uniformly carried, might be supposed to make men wise and good.

MR. HILL, among other things delivered with great freedom and spirit, reprobated Mr. Stanhope's idea of addressing the King. The House of Commons were the persons with whom the people had to do, being their attorneys. He lamented that in the present state of things, this
county

county was not represented at all, one of its members voting one way, the other another.—He represented the American war as the great source of our misfortunes; and gave notice of a motion to be made concerning it by a gentleman there present. Alluding to something that had fallen from Mr. Stanhope concerning the engagements which the Masters of Arts at Cambridge might be already under, which might hinder their signing an Association like that proposed, he told the assembly that he was informed that the people of Cambridgeshire were going to turn out their present members, for betraying the trust they reposed in them. He dwelt long and powerfully on the great importance of unanimity on so serious and momentous an occasion: Those who were agreed in the great object, and the general line of pursuing it, ought, he thought, to suppress their own peculiar wishes as to lesser, incidental, and collateral matters, a sentiment which came with great weight on those who knew that this was the case and conduct of the Speaker.

After this, Mr. WYVILL rose to observe that he thought the gentlemen who had declared their scruples to sign the Association, did not disapprove the constitutional improvements which that measure was formed to attain.—It had not been denied that the people are very partially and very unfairly represented in Parliament, or that the superior weight of the boroughs, which

has been found so dangerous to the country, would not be effectually checked and counteracted by reinforcing the representation of the counties. That, with respect to the shorter duration of Parliament, the objection which had been insisted on was foreseen by the Committee, was considered by them as an objection of much importance, and therefore they had guarded against it with the utmost caution; that it was evidently the meaning of that article, in the Plan of Association, which respected shortening the duration of Parliament, that this measure should take place after the necessary reforms in the expenditure of public money, and the representation of the people; when more frequent elections might be restored without danger to men of independent spirit and fortune, from the then diminished influence of the Treasury. That if, on this view of the article in question, the scruples of those gentlemen should still remain, he should extremely regret it, but, highly as he respected them, on this occasion he should certainly differ from them. He was sensible of the great weight their opinions must have in that assembly, and was apprehensive that what he had advanced might be considered as the closet speculations of an unexperienced man; but he reminded the meeting, that he was supported against the opinion of those experienced gentlemen, by the authority of one of the most consummate statesmen whom this country had ever produced. In the judgement of Lord Chatham,

Chatham, the measures which had been this day proposed, as the objects of the Association, were necessary for the preservation of public liberty. Supported by his authority, therefore, he should persevere in his propositions. He exhorted the meeting to adopt the Association, and expressed the warmest hopes of success. Go on, said he, my friends and countrymen; go on, and be free.—After which, the question was put by the Chairman, and the Plan of Association received the approbation of the Meeting.

The fourth resolution respecting the American war, which Mr. Hill had alluded to, was moved by General HALE, after a very spirited speech, in which, having first, with an air of great simplicity and credibility, disavowed all sinister motives and all fear of consequences, he stated and supported his opinion, that much of our unhappiness arose from the American war, which was unjust in itself, impolitic in its tendencies, and had been, in many instances, prosecuted with a degree of cruelty which was disgraceful to the character of this nation, and even to humankind.

The motion was seconded by Mr. WYVILL, and a letter of Mr. D. Hartley's on the subject, setting forth the mischiefs of the American war, and the circumstances which suggested hope that an accommodation with America might be obtained, if a disposition to it which could be credited were shown, was read, as a part of Mr.

Wyvill's speech in support of the motion; which immediately passed, like all the rest, with testimonials of particular satisfaction and applause.—The only motion which did not pass unanimously was that for adopting the Plan of Association; but the majority which assented to it was very great, and approached nearly to the whole number of the assembly.

NUMBER V.

NUMBER V.

Paper I.

Resolutions at a Meeting, on the 29th of March, 1780, of the Committee of Association, appointed at a General Meeting of the County of York, on the 28th day of March, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Mr. Morritt	Mr. Strickland of Boynton
Mr. C. St. Quintin	Mr. Barlow
Mr. Elsiey	Mr. Cradock
Rev. John Bourne	Mr. Hill
Mr. Croft	Mr. H. Thompson
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. P. Milnes
Mr. Farrer	Mr. St. A. Ward
Mr. F. Smyth	Rev. John Robinson
Mr. Chaloner	Mr. Strickland of Beverley
Mr. Hildyard	Rev. William Mason
Sir James Norcliffe	Rev. William Comber
Rev. Henry Zouch	Mr. Foljambe
Mr. Tooker	Mr. Duncombe
Mr. Withers	Rev. William Cayley
Mr. J. S. Smith	Lieutenant Colonel Thornton
Rev. Fred. Dodsworth	Sir William Milner
General Hale	Dean of York
Rev. William Dealtry	Sir William Anderfon
Mr. Pool	Sir Wm. St. Quintin
Mr. Dring	Mr. T. Weddell
Mr. H. Duncombe	Dr. Swainston

MEMBERS

MEMBERS ELECTED this DAY.

Rev. Luke Yarker Mr. Grimston
Sir Geo. Strickland Mr. B. Foord

Resolved, That no gentleman be admitted a Member of this Committee, to whom five gentlemen of the Committee, at the time of proposing such additional Member, shall object.

Resolved, That the following gentlemen be added to this Committee.

John Parker, Esq; Woodthorpe
Rev. John Stacey, Ballisfield
William Harrison, Esq; Orgrave
Samuel Walker, Esq; Rotherham
John Booth, Esq; Brush-House
C. W. Childers, Esq; Cantley
Lascelles Sturdy Lascelles, Esq; Helperby
Barnard Foord, Esq; West-Heslerton
Thomas Grimston, Esq; Birkby
Sir George Strickland, Bart. Boynton
John Courtney, Esq; Beverley
John Milnes, Esq; Wakefield
Francis Maude, Esq; Leathley
Richard Wilson, Esq; Leeds
Robert Athorpe Athorpe, Esq; Dinnington

Declined acting—Rev. Francis Blackburn, Richmond

Rev. John Whaley, Huggate
John Grimston, Esq; Kilnwick
John Mathews, Esq; Whitby
James Milnes, jun. Esq; Wakefield
Rev. Luke Yarker, Leyburn
Rev. Robert Croft, Hayton
James Stovin, Esq; Whitgift
Sir John Legard, Bart. Ganton
Sir John Coghill, Bart. Coghill-Hall

Declined acting—John Aspinall, Esq;

Richard Milnes, Esq; Wakefield
Rev. Thomas Zouch, Wycliffe

Humphrey

Humphrey Osbaldeston, Esq; Hunmanby
 George Osbaldeston, Esq; Hutton Bushell
 William Dawson, Esq; Calverton
 Rev. John Dixon, Worsbrough
 Rev. John Preston, Askam-Bryan
 Gamaliel Lloyd, Esq; Leeds
 John Micklewaite, Esq; Leeds
 Richard Sykes, Esq; Hull
 John Dixon, Esq; Gledhow
 John Yarker, Esq; Leyburn

Declined acting—Sir George Cook, Bart. Wheatley

Resolved, That a Sub-Committee of correspondence, consisting of such gentlemen of the Committee as reside in or near York, or happen to be in York occasionally, be established to prepare answers to letters, which may be received during the adjournment of this Committee, in order to be laid before this Committee at their next Meeting, and that those gentlemen be requested, in the mean time, to acknowledge the receipt of such letters, and to take such measures as they may judge proper to promote the circulation and success of the Form of Association, and also be empowered, in case of any unforeseen emergency, to call this Committee together.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to General Hale, for his speech at the General Meeting, in which the sentiments of the soldier and the free citizen were so liberally and so constitutionally expressed.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Wednesday the third day of May next.

C. WYVILL,

Paper II.

Paper II.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association, held upon a Call by the Sub-Committee, on the 15th of April, 1780.

PRESENT,

Sir JAMES NORCLIFFE, Chairman,

Mr. Morritt	Mr. T. Place
Sir William Anderson	Rev. R. Croft
Rev. William Cayley	Mr. Garforth
Mr. Grimston	Mr. St. Quintin
Rev. John Preston	Rev. L. Yarker
Mr. T. Weddell	Mr. Dring
Mr. Croft	Mr. Dawson
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. Foord
Dean of York	Sir William Milner
Mr. T. Grimston	Mr. Barlow
Mr. Hill	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Wentworth	Rev. William Dealtry

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to John Dunning, Esq; for the following motions made by him in the House of Commons on the 6th instant.

1. That it is necessary to declare that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.

2. That it is competent to the House of Commons to examine into and to correct the abuses in the expenditure of the Civil List Revenue, as well

well as in every other branch of the Public Revenue, whenever it shall seem expedient to the wisdom of the House so to do.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Thomas Pitt, Esq; for the following motion made by him in the House of Commons on the 6th instant.

That it is the duty of the House of Commons to provide as far as may be an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented from the different counties, cities, and towns, of this kingdom.

Resolved, That whenever the Committee of this county shall be called together by the Sub-Committee, every Member thereof shall have notice sent to him of such intended Meeting; and, that in the letter of notice, it shall be signified upon what business the Committee is expected to proceed.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Committee be given to those gentlemen of the Sub-Committee, who called this Committee together.

JAMES NORCLIFFE, Chairman
of the day.

Paper III.

Paper III.

Report of the Committee appointed by the General Meeting of the County of Sussex, held at Lewes, on the 20th of January, 1780, for giving every legal and constitutional support to their Petition.

THE Chairman of your Committee has, in obedience to your resolution, written to all the Members of Parliament serving for the city and boroughs of this county, to solicit their support in Parliament to your Petition. Your Committee, in pursuance of your resolution, "That they should give every legal and constitutional support to your Petition," have returned their thanks to several Lords and Gentlemen, in both Houses of Parliament, for moving and supporting various propositions which appeared to your Committee, as greatly tending to promote the objects of your petitions. These propositions were,

1st, One made by the Earl of Shelburne, in the House of Lords, for appointing a Committee of Members of both Houses of Parliament, possessing neither emolument nor pension, for examining into the public expenditure, and the mode

mode of accounting for the same; and more particularly into the manner of making all contracts; and also for reforming or abolishing all inefficient or useless offices, and for applying the savings arising therefrom to lessen the present ruinous expenditure. Fifty-five Lords voted for this motion, which was however negatived, by a considerable majority.

2dly, A motion made by Sir George Savile, in the House of Commons, for the pension list; and one made by the Earl of Effingham, for a list of pensions held by Peers. Both these motions, although essentially necessary, in order to effectuate one of the principal objects of the prayer of your petitions, were negatived; that in the House of Lords by a large majority, that in the House of Commons by two votes only, there having been, for the question 186, against it 188.

3dly, Several motions made by Mr. Burke, for bills to regulate and reform several branches of the Civil List, and other establishments of Government, whereby a sum not less than 200,000*l.* a year, would have been saved to the public, and the influence of the Crown over fifty Members of Parliament, would have been taken away. One clause only of these excellent bills has as yet been carried in the House of Commons, viz. the abolition of the Board of Trade, consisting of eight Members of Parliament, receiving great salaries, and who were
voted

voted useless. This vote was carried by a majority of eight. For the question 207, against it 199.

The clauses for abolishing the new office of a third Secretary of State, for America, the three subordinate Treasuries in the Household, and the Board of Green Cloth, including thirteen Members of Parliament, and one hundred and forty-seven officers with salaries from 500*l.* a year, and downwards, and for securing the surplus of the Civil List revenue from being applied to corrupt purposes, were rejected.

4thly, A bill brought into the House of Commons by Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, for restraining Members of that House from being concerned in contracts, unless made at a public bidding. This bill passed the House without a division, and is now depending in the House of Lords.

5thly, A motion made by Colonel Barre for a commission of accounts. This motion was taken out of his hands by Lord North, who will now have the appointment of the persons who are to examine his own accounts.

6thly, A resolution proposed by Mr. Dunning, in the House of Commons, "That the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." As this and the following proposition had been frequently denied by the Ministers, in both Houses of Parliament, it was become highly necessary to come to an explicit declaration upon them. This question

was

was carried in the affirmative by the supporters of your petitions, against the utmost efforts of administration, by a majority of 233 to 215.

7thly, Another resolution proposed by the same gentleman, "That it is competent to the House of Commons to examine into and correct the abuses in the expenditure of the Civil List Revenue, as well as in every other branch of the Public Revenue, whenever it shall seem expedient to the wisdom of the House so to do," which was also carried on Thursday last, without a division.

8thly, A motion made by Mr. Thomas Pitt, "That it is the duty of the House of Commons, to provide, as far as may be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented from the different counties, cities, and boroughs, in this kingdom." This motion also passed, on the same day, without a division.

Your Committee, from the best accounts they have been able to obtain, have reason to believe, that the Peers, and Members of the House of Commons, belonging to this county, voted on the above questions as follow: If any mistake should appear in this list, it is hoped that those who are concerned will rectify it, that the county may distinguish those who have supported, from those who have opposed their petitions.

HOUSE of LORDS.

	<i>Earl of Stelburne's Motion.</i>	<i>Earl of Effingham's Motion.</i>
Duke of Richmond,	For	For
Duke of Dorset,	Against	Absent
Earl of Ashburnham,	Against	Absent
Earl of Egremont,	For	Absent
Bishop of Chichester,	Against	Against
Lord Viscount Hampden,	Against	Absent
Lord Abergavenny,	For	For
Lord Pelham,	Against	Against

HOUSE

Your

Mr. Dunning's motion for dismissing the indictment against the crew.

**For [House
Went out of the**

For

F

For

Against

— **Agaric**

For

Against

**ADDITIONAL
FOR**

For

For

13

For

— **Agencia**

Against

Against Against

**For
Against**

Your Committee have also congratulated the Earl of Shelburne on his recovery from the danger to which his life had been exposed, for having animadverted in the House of Peers on the improper appointments lately made in the new raised levies.

Your Committee having observed in the public papers, a Protest against your Petition, thought it necessary to make an answer thereto, in which, your Committee trust, they have fully vindicated your right to petition, and your petition itself, from the unwarranted imputations that had been thrown upon it. As this answer has been published in the public papers, signed by their Chairman, your Committee think it unnecessary now to repeat it.

Your Committee having received an invitation to depute three of their Members to meet a like number of Deputies from the Committees of other counties, cities, and towns, to confer on the objects of your petitions, appointed Mr. Frankland, their Chairman, with Mr. Webster and Mr. Peckham, for this purpose. And your Committee having received from this Meeting of Deputies a memorial and letter, signed by their Chairman, the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, think it their duty to lay the same before this Meeting, and it is hereunto annexed.

Your Committee next turned their thoughts to perform that part of your instructions, wherein you direct them to consider of and prepare a
Plan

Plan for a General Association of this county, for supporting the grounds of the Petition, and restoring independency to Parliament. And having taken the foregoing memorial and letter into consideration, and likewise the resolutions which passed in the House of Commons on Thursday last, are of opinion, that the situation of affairs is considerably changed since the said memorial was framed, and consequently may require different measures to be pursued. And your Committee conceive, that it is impossible but that the House of Commons will proceed to diminish that influence, which it has resolved *it was necessary to declare ought to be diminished*, and will afford that immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in your petitions, which the fullest House known for many years has so lately voted *it to be their duty to provide*.

Your Committee can ascribe so great and so sudden a change in the disposition of the House of Commons, to no other cause than the spirited exertions of the people, and the prudential attention of the Representatives to their complaints in the year preceding a General Election: Nor can your Committee hope for its continuance but from a perseverance on your parts in such temperate and firm measures as you have hitherto pursued.

In this new situation of affairs, it is the opinion of your Committee, which they submit with all deference and respect to this Meeting,

that it will be expedient to wait until the end of this Session of Parliament, in expectation of the promised redress; and to postpone until that period entering into any Association, which, if the objects of your Petitions are fully granted, may become useless, or if refused, will be more indispensibly necessary.

Your Committee, perfectly coinciding with the memorial in the importance of adopting some measures for remedying the bad consequences arising from the present length of Parliaments, and the unequal Representation of the People, and other matters recommended in the Memorial, have agreed to several resolutions, which they have directed their Chairman to submit to this Meeting.

1st, That the oeconomic reform recommended by the petitions, be unremittingly persevered in.

2d, That the influence of the Crown, which has increased, and is increasing, ought to be diminished.

3d, That the duration of Parliaments should be shortened.

4th, That the unequal Representation of the People is a grievance that stands in need of remedy; And that the addition to the present Representatives of counties of a number of Members not less than one hundred, to be chosen in a due proportion by the several counties of Great-Britain, may tend to promote this necessary reform.

5th, That

5th, That the obtaining a law for taking the suffrages of the people, in such a mode as to prevent both expence in elections, and the operation of undue influence therein, is necessary towards securing the freedom of Parliament.

6th, That in just expectation of an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the Petitions of the People, which the House of Commons have solemnly voted it to be their duty to provide, this county will postpone entering into any Association, until the end of the present Session of Parliament.

7th, That a new Committee be appointed, with the same powers that were given to the former Committee; that the said Committee shall be empowered to add to their number, and to call a General Meeting of this county, whenever they shall think it necessary, in order to lay before them a PLAN of ASSOCIATION, or such other propositions, as the circumstances of the times may require.

W. FRANKLAND, Chairman.

Paper IV.

Proceedings at a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County of Sussex, held on Thursday the 13th day of April, 1780, by adjournment from the last General Meeting; at the Town-Hall in Lewes.

THE report of the Committee was read, and also a letter from Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, Bart. one of the Representatives of this county, which is as follows:

WELBECK-STREET, April 7, 1780.

Sir,

YOUR favour of January the 20th ult. inclosing the Sussex Petition to Parliament, being directed to Bond-street, did not reach my hands till yesterday, which I hope will apologize for a seeming inattention that would have been unpardonable. I have a very high respect for the signers of that Petition, and never condemning any one for differing in opinion with me in political or other matters, always presuming that principle alone is the guide—

guide—I have a right to expect the same indulgence from others: I most undoubtedly should wish to have every part of my conduct approved of by those whose judgement and principles I respect; but as I connect myself with no party whatsoever, will, in matters I think myself competent, judge for myself, always most heartily adopting a good measure, though it should come from my greatest enemy, and rejecting an improper one, though proposed by the persons I most esteem. Some grievances urged in the Petition to exist, are what every man not benefited by their existing, must wish to be reformed, and no man more so than myself. Part of the resolutions, (if my health had permitted me to attend the Meeting) I never could have joined in, and the latter part of the prayer I most undoubtedly should have objected to.

I trust, Sir, that this letter, expressing my sentiments, will by you be made known to the county of Suffex at large.

I am, Sir, with the highest respect to the signers of the Petition, and to the noblemen and gentlemen composing the Committee, their and your most obliged, and very obedient humble servant,

THOMAS SPENCER WILSON.

To WILLIAM FRANKLAND, Esq; Chairman of
a Committee, appointed by a Meeting of the
Noblemen,

Noblemen, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and other inhabitants of the county of Suffex, held at Lewes, Jan. 20, 1780.

Resolved, with only three dissentient voices, That the oeconomical reform, recommended by the Petitions, be unremittingly persevered in.

Resolved unanimously, That the influence of the Crown, which has increased, and is increasing, ought to be diminished.

Resolved, with only one dissentient voice, That the duration of Parliaments should be shortened.

Resolved, with only two dissentient voices, That the unequal Representation of the People is a grievance that stands in need of remedy; and that the addition to the present Representatives of counties, of a number of Members, not less than one hundred, to be chosen in a due proportion by the several counties of Great-Britain, may tend to promote this necessary reform.

Resolved unanimously, That the obtaining a law for taking the suffrages of the people, in such a mode as to prevent both expence in elections and the operation of undue influence therein, is necessary towards securing the Freedom of Parliament,

Resolved, with only one dissentient voice, That in the just expectation of an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of

of in the Petitions of the People, which the House of Commons have solemnly voted to be their duty to provide, this county will postpone entering into any Association until the end of the present Sessions of Parliament.

Resolved, with only three dissentient voices, That a new Committee be appointed with the same powers that were given to the former Committee; that the said Committee shall be empowered to add to their number gentlemen having property in Suffex, and to call a General Meeting of this county whenever they shall think it necessary, in order to lay before them a Plan of Association, or such other propositions as the circumstances of the case may require.

The said Committee to consist of the following gentlemen, viz,

Duke of Richmond	Rev. Mr. Bethune
Right Hon. Earl of Egremont	Richard Bettesworth, Esq;
Lord George Lenox	Harry Bishop, Esq;
Right Hon. Lord Abergavenny	Samuel Blunt, Esq;
Hon. Charles Wyndham	William Board, Esq;
Hon. Henry Neville	William Brereton, Esq;
Hon. George Neville	Charles Buckner, Esq;
Sir Harry Featherstone, Bart.	Rev. Mr. Buckner
Sir Harry Goring, Bart.	John Challen, Esq;
Sir Thomas Miller, Bart.	Thomas Chown, Esq;
Sir George Thomas, Bart.	John Cranston, Esq;
Sir Godfrey Webster, Bart.	Rev. Mr. Coppard
Sir John Brewer Davis, Knt.	Rev. Mr. Davis
John Aldridge, Esq;	Rev. Mr. D'Oyley
Rev. John Atkinson	Michael Dorsett, Esq;
John Barkshell, Esq;	William Frankland, Esq;
Rev. Mr. Bayley	John Fuller of Heathfield, Esq;
	William

William Green of Findon, Esq;	Rev. Henry Peckham
William Green of Lewes, Esq;	Nathaniel Polhill, Esq;
James Goble, Esq;	William Richardson, Esq;
Thomas Hay, Esq;	Dr. Rycroft
Henry Jackson, Esq;	Rev. Mr. Shenton
Wm. Kempe, Serjeant at Law	William Smith, Esq;
Thomas Kempe, Esq;	Rev. Charles Smith
William Mill-Leeves, Esq;	Walter Smyth, Esq;
James Lloyd, Esq;	Thomas Steele, Esq;
Stephen Lushington, Esq;	Robert Steele, Esq;
John Luther, Esq;	George White Thomas, Esq;
Gawen Harris Nash, Esq;	Nathaniel Tredcroft, Esq;
Bingham Newland, Esq;	Rev. Mr. Tredcroft
Thomas Norton, Esq;	Rev. Mr. Tripp
John Norton, Esq;	Dr. Watts
John Bridger Norton, Esq;	Rev. Mr. Webber
John Pain, Esq;	Godfrey Webster, Esq;
Harry Peckham, Esq;	Rev. William Woodward.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to William Frankland, Esq; the Chairman, and to Godfrey Webster and Harry Peckham, Esqrs. for the able and faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them, as Deputies to the General Committee held in London. And that the thanks of this Meeting be also given to the Committee appointed on the 20th of January last, for their attention and pains in forwarding the object of the Petition.

Resolved unanimously, That this Meeting be adjourned sine die, subject to the call of the Chairman, and a quorum of the said Committee, in the Lewes Journal.

W. FRANKLAND, Chairman.

Paper V.

Paper V.

HERTFORD, April 17, 1780.

*Proceedings at the adjourned General Meeting of
the County of Hertford, held this day at the
Shire-house, in the Town of Hertford.*

The following Plan of Association was agreed to:

WHEREAS a Petition, agreed on at a General Meeting of this county on Monday the 17th of January last, praying for an oeconomical reform in the expenditure of public money, and for a reduction of the influence of the Crown, has been presented to the House of Commons in the names of the freeholders of this county, and no effectual redress has yet been obtained of the abuses therein stated,

We, the Nobility, Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders, of the said county, considering the various arts which have been used by the enemies of our happy constitution, to misrepresent our motives and conduct, in promoting the said Petition,—do thus publicly declare our entire and zealous approbation of the Legislature of this country, as placed in the free and independent concurrence of King, Lords, and Commons, and that we most anxiously and sincerely wish the blessing of this form of Legislature may be

be continued to our latest posterity. And seeing the necessity of a speedy reformation of the abuses and grievances mentioned in the said Petition, do agree to unite and associate ourselves, and to encourage all other land-owners of this county to associate with us, for the purpose of obtaining a bill, or bills, to diminish the increased and increasing influence of the Crown; to correct profusion in the expenditure of the public money; to regulate the manner of making all public contracts, and mode of keeping and passing public accounts; to reduce exorbitant emoluments of office; to reform the abuses of sinecure places, and pensions unmerited by public service,—and to limit the number of placemen sitting in Parliament.

And in order more effectually to promote this salutary plan of public reformation,—we do jointly and separately resolve unremittingly to persevere in supporting, to the utmost of our power, these and all other regulations necessary for obtaining the objects proposed in the said Petition; and we testify the same by our signatures respectively:

After which the following resolutions were moved, and unanimously agreed to.

1. Resolved nem. con. That a bill to establish greater equality in the Representation of the People in Parliament, by allowing the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain to elect, in a due proportion, one hundred knights;
at

at least, in addition to the present number, may tend to promote the said reform.

2. Resolved nem. con. That a bill to shorten the duration of Parliament, to a term not exceeding three years, may tend to promote the said reform.

3. That this Meeting will discountenance all corrupt and unnecessary expences at any future elections, as such discouragement will promote in a considerable degree the freedom of election, which must immediately tend to secure the Independence of Parliament.

4. That it is the opinion of this Meeting, that carrying on a war against North America is most evidently a measure which, by employing our great and enormously expensive military operations against the inhabitants of that country, prevents this from exerting its united, vigorous, and firm efforts against the powers of France and Spain; and has no other effect upon America, than to continue, and thereby to increase, the enmity which has so long and so fatally subsisted between the two countries, can be productive of no good whatsoever,—but by preventing conciliation, threatens the accomplishment of the final ruin of the British empire.

5. That the Committee heretofore appointed, be a Committee of Association, and that nine gentlemen of the Committee, or more, be empowered to act as a Committee; to add to their number, and to take such legal and constitutional measures as to them shall appear most expedient for promoting the objects of the Association.

6. That it be an instruction of this Meeting to their Committee, now appointed, to endeavour to procure, as soon as may be convenient, a general deputation from all such Petitioning Bodies as shall have associated for the purpose of obtaining redress of the national grievances, to be held in the city of London or Westminster, to compare their several Plans of Association, and to consult upon a general union, in such constitutional measures, as to them shall appear necessary for the attainment of the above objects; subject to such further instructions as the General Meeting of this county may think fit to give.

7. Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to George Jennings, Esq; the Chairman.

8. Resolved unanimously, That George Jennings, Esq; be appointed Chairman of the Committee of Association.

9. Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to William Plumer and Thomas Halsey, Esquires, the Representatives of this county, John Radcliffe, Esq; the Member for the town of St. Alban's, Lord George H. Cavendish, Sir A. Hume, Bart. William Baker, George Byng, Esqrs. Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, Bart. and the Right Hon. T. Townsend, Members of the Committee, assembled by the General Meeting of this county, for their steady and decided support of the rights and petitions of the People, both in and out of Parliament.

That this Meeting be adjourned, subject to a call by the Committee of Association.

GEORGE JENNINGS, Chairman.

Paper VI.

Report of the Committee, appointed by the General Meeting of the County of Essex, held in the Shire-hall, at Chelmsford, on the 24th of January, 1780, for giving every legal and constitutional support to their Petition, presented to the General Meeting of that County, held at the same place on the 25th day of April, 1780.

YOUR Committee considering the various arts which have been used by the enemies of our happy constitution, to misrepresent the motives and conduct of the Committee, do think proper thus publicly to declare their entire approbation of the Legislative power of this country, as placed in the free and independent concurrence of King, Lords, and Commons; and this Committee do anxiously wish the blessings of this Form of Government to be continued to their latest posterity in its constitutional purity.

Your Committee, for the purpose of carrying on the necessary correspondence for effectually promoting the objects of your Petition, have, by their Chairman, written to all the Members of Parliament, serving for the boroughs of this county, to solicit their support in Parliament to your Petition.

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Your

Your Committee have returned their thanks to several Lords and Gentlemen, in both Houses of Parliament, for moving and supporting various propositions, which appeared to your Committee as greatly tending to promote the objects of your petitions: these propositions were—

1st. One made by the Earl of Shelburne, in the House of Lords, for appointing a Committee of Members of both Houses of Parliament, possessing neither emolument nor pension, to examine into the public expenditure, and the mode of accounting for the same; and more particularly into the manner of making all contracts; and also for reforming or abolishing all inefficient or useless offices, and for applying the savings arising therefrom to lessen the present ruinous expenditure; fifty-five Lords voted for this motion, which was however negatived by a considerable majority.

2dly. A motion made by Sir George Savile, in the House of Commons, for the pension list; and one made by the Earl of Effingham, for a list of pensions held by Peers,—both these motions, although essentially necessary in order to effectuate one of the principal objects of the prayer of your petitions, were negatived: that in the House of Commons by two only, there having been for the question 186, against it 188.

3dly. Several motions made by Mr. Burke for bills to regulate and reform certain branches of the civil list, and other establishments of government,

vernment, whereby a sum not less than 200,000*l.* a year would have been saved to the public, and the influence of the Crown over fifty Members of Parliament would have been taken away, one clause only of these excellent bills has as yet been carried in the House of Commons, viz. The abolition of the Board of Trade, consisting of eight Members of Parliament, receiving great salaries, and who were voted useless: this vote was carried by a majority of eight—for the question 207, against it 199.

The clauses for abolishing the new office of a third Secretary of State for America, the three subordinate Treasuries in the Household, and the Board of Green Cloth, including 13 Members of Parliament, and 147 Officers, with salaries from 500*l.* a year and downwards; and for securing the surplus of the civil list revenue from being applied to corrupt purposes, were rejected.

4thly. A bill brought into the House of Commons by Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, for restraining Members of that House from being concerned in contracts, unless made at a public bidding. This bill passed the House of Commons without a division, but to our very great concern was rejected in the House of Lords.

5thly. A motion made by Colonel Barre, for a commission of accounts. This motion was taken out of his hands by Lord North, who has now the appointment of the persons who are to examine his own accounts.

6thly, A resolution proposed by Mr. Dunning in the House of Commons, "That the influence of the Crown, has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." As this and the following propositions had been frequently denied by the Ministers, in both Houses of Parliament, it was become highly necessary to come to an explicit declaration upon them. This question was carried in the affirmative by the supporters of your petitions, against the utmost efforts of Administration, by a majority of 233 to 215.

7thly, Another resolution proposed by the same gentleman, "That it is competent to the House of Commons to examine into and correct the abuses in the expenditure of the civil list revenue; as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it shall seem expedient to the wisdom of the House so to do," which was also carried without a division.

8thly. A motion made by Mr. Thomas Pitt, "That it is the duty of the House of Commons, to provide as far as may be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in petitions presented from different counties, cities, and boroughs, in this kingdom." This motion also passed on the same day without a division.

9thly. A motion made by John Crewe, Esq; in the House of Commons, for a bill to exclude revenue officers from voting at elections, a measure tending to promote one of the great objects of the petitions of this county, by diminishing the

the undue and unconstitutional influence of the Crown. Which motion was rejected.

Your Committee, from the best accounts they have been able to obtain, have reason to believe that the Members of the House of Commons, belonging to this county, voted on the above questions as follows:—If any mistake should appear in this list, it is hoped that those who are concerned will rectify it, that the county may distinguish those who have supported, from those who have opposed, their petitions to the House of Commons,

N 3

*Mr. Burke's motion
for abolishing the
office of 3d Secretary
of State for America.*

For
Against
—
—
Against
Against
Against
Against

*Mr. Burke's motion
for abolishing the
office of 3d Secretary
of State for America.*

For
Against
—
—
Against
Against
Against
Against

*Sir G. Saville's motion
for the pension list.*

For
Against
Absent on ac-
count of health
Against
Against
Against
Against

County { John Luther,
Thomas Berney Brampton
Colchester { Charles Gray
Isaac Martin Rebow
Maldon { Richard Savage Nassau
John Strutt
Harwich { George Augustus North
John Robinson, Teller

*Mr. Dunning's motion
for diminishing the in-
fluence of the Crown.*

For
Went away
—
—
Against
Against
Against
Against

*Mr. Burke's motion for
abolishing the subordi-
nate Treasuries in the
Household, and the
Board of Green Cloth.*

For
Against
Absent on ac-
count of health
Absent
Absent
Absent
Against

County { John Luther
Thomas Berney Brampton
Colchester { Charles Gray
Isaac Martin Rebow
Maldon { Richard Savage Nassau
John Strutt
Harwich { George Augustus North
John Robinson, Teller

Your

Your Committee have also congratulated the Earl of Shelburne on his recovery from the danger to which his life had been exposed, for having animadverted in the House of Peers on the improper appointments lately made in the new raised levies.

Your Committee having observed, in the public papers, a letter addressed to William Godfrey, Esq; the late Sheriff of this county, signed by a part of the Grand Jury, thanking him for having declined to call a County Meeting for the purpose of Petitioning Parliament for a redress of grievances, which letter reflected highly upon the unanimous proceedings of the late County Meeting held for the above purpose: your Committee did conceive it necessary to take such letter into their serious consideration, and did accordingly publish their sense of its contents, in justification of the conduct of such Meeting, from the illiberal and unwarrantable attack which that letter contained; and as the same has been inserted in the public papers, they now think it unnecessary to be here repeated.

Your Committee having received an invitation to depute three of their Members to meet the Deputies from the Committees of other counties, cities, and towns, to confer on the objects of your petitions, appointed Sir Robert Smyth, Bart. Richard Muilman Trench Chifwell, Esq; and Richard Baker, Esq; for this purpose, and your Committee having received from this

Meeting of Deputies a memorial signed by their Chairman, the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, have printed, published, and circulated, the same throughout this county.

Your Committee next attending to that part of your instructions, wherein you direct them to consider of, and prepare, a Plan for a General Association of this county, for supporting the grounds of the Petition, and restoring independency to Parliament, have accordingly prepared such plan, which they now submit to the general sense of this Meeting.

ROBERT SMYTH,
Chairman of the Committee.

Paper VII.

Proceedings at a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Gentlemen, Clergy, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, of the County of Essex, held on Tuesday, the 25th day of April, 1780, by adjournment from the last General Meeting, at the Shire-hall, in Chelmsford.

A Form of Association, having been agreed to by the Committee of the county of Essex, was recommended to the General Meeting; and a motion being made and the question put

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Resolved,

Resolved, with only four dissentient voices,
That this Form of Association be adopted by
this Meeting.

Resolved unanimously, That the Committee
of Correspondence be appointed a Committee of
Association, and be empowered to add to their
number, and to take such legal and constitutional
measures as to them shall appear most expedient
for promoting the object of this Association.

Resolved unanimously, That it be an instruc-
tion of this Meeting to the Committee now ap-
pointed, to endeavour, as soon as may be conve-
nient, to procure a general deputation from all
such Petitioning Bodies as shall have associated,
for the purpose of obtaining a redress of the na-
tional grievances, to be held in the cities of
London or Westminster, such deputation hav-
ing full power and authority from their respec-
tive Committees to compare the several plans of
Association, and to consult and determine upon
a general union, in such constitutional measures
as shall to them appear necessary for the obtain-
ment of the above object.

Resolved unanimously, That it be recom-
mended to the Committee appointed by this
meeting, to consider of, and form, upon legal
and constitutional grounds, a proper plan for the
detecting and bringing to justice all persons who
at the ensuing general election shall either give
or receive bribes for the election of members to
serve in Parliament; and that such plan, when
settled

settled and agreed upon, be communicated to other associated bodies.

Resolved unanimously, That this meeting sensibly regret the rejection of the Contractor's bill by the House of Lords, on the 14th instant, as tending to disappoint the expectations of the petitioners; and that the thanks of this meeting be given to the forty-one Lords who supported the above bill, and thereby shewed their attention to the wishes of the people, expressed in their petitions to the House of Commons.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be given to John Luther, Esq; for his unremitted zeal in promoting every object of the petitioners; and that they declare their entire approbation of his Parliamentary conduct on all questions respecting the nation in general, and the particular rights and interests of his constituents.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be given to Sir Robert Smith, Bart. (Chairman of the Committee) Richard Muilman Trench Chifwell, and Richard Baker, Esqrs. for the able and faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them, as deputies to the General Committee held in London; and that the thanks of this meeting be also given to the Committee appointed on the 24th of January last, for their attention and pains in forwarding the object of the petition.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of
this

this meeting be given to the Chairman of this meeting.

Resolved unanimously, That this meeting be adjourned, subject to a call of the Committee of Association.

R. MUILMAN TRENCH CHISWELL,
Chairman of the Meeting.

* The Form of Association being nearly the same as that adopted by the county of York, is therefore omitted. To the proposition for Members of the House of Commons to be elected to serve in Parliament, for a term not exceeding three years, an addition was made, "declaring that annual Parliaments are the birthright of Englishmen;" but the specific measures for obtaining which, the counties of Essex and York associated, were the same.

Paper VIII.

*Letter from David Parry, Esq; to the Rev.
C. Wyvill.*

CRITCHELL, near Salisbury, May 8, 1780.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour of transmitting to you the proceedings of the General Assembly of the County of Dorset, and beg to observe, that the extensive subject at present under the consideration of the people is certainly as serious in its nature, and will doubtless

less be of as much magnitude in its consequences, as ever was agitated in this country. The good or ill, the happiness or misery, of the nation, hang upon its fate. It is totally unconnected with party, totally untainted with party prejudices, and infinitely interesting to every individual in this kingdom, who is, or thinks he is, intitled to any share of civil or political liberty; and I trust no member of the community at large, and particularly of the Free and Independent Body of Associators, will ever relinquish his claim to these sovereign blessings, or be, by the haughty insulting language of ill-acquired power, intimidated from exerting every faculty he is possessed of, to the full attainment of our present laudable pursuit *in all its parts*; which steady perseverance, and a general association, upon liberal constitutional grounds, cannot fail of producing.

I have the honour to be,

With all possible respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

D. PARRY,

Chairman of the Dorsetshire
Committee.

To the Rev. Mr. WYVILL,

York-Tavern, York.

Paper IX.

DORCHESTER, 25th April, 1780.

*Proceedings at the Adjourned General Meeting of
the County of Dorset, held in the Shire-Hall.*

A Report of the Progress of the Committee of Correspondence was made by the Chairman, who then left the chair, but was unanimously requested to resume it. A Committee of Association was appointed, and the following Terms of Association were agreed to, and signed by all present—

WHEREAS a petition, agreed on at a General Meeting of this County, on Tuesday the 27th day of January, 1780, praying for an economical reform in the expenditure of public money, has been presented to the House of Commons, in the names of the freeholders of this county, and no effectual redress has yet been obtained of the abuses therein stated.

WE, the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the said county, considering the various arts which have been used by the enemies of our happy constitution to misrepresent our motives and conduct in promoting the said petition, do thus publicly declare our entire and zealous approbation of the legislature of this country, as
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placed in the free and independent concurrence of King, Lords, and Commons, and that we most anxiously and sincerely wish the blessing of this form of legislature may be continued to our latest posterity; and seeing the necessity of a speedy reformation of the abuses and grievances mentioned in the said petition, do agree to unite in such just and legal means as may be necessary for the obtaining a bill or bills to diminish the encreased and encreasing influence of the Crown; to correct profusion in the expenditure of public money; to regulate the manner of making all public contracts, and the mode of keeping and passing all public accounts; to reduce exorbitant emoluments of office; to reform the abuses of sinecure places and pensions, unmerited by public service; and to limit the number of placemen sitting in Parliament.

And whereas we cannot but think, that the unhappy state to which this once-flourishing country is now reduced, has in a great measure been owing to the rash and imprudent contest so long and so unprosperously pursued with North-America,

It is resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to those members of both Houses of Parliament, who, foreseeing, and forewarning the country of the consequences, have uniformly opposed the coercive measures against America; and that they may be entreated to use their wisdom in accomplishing, and not even yet to despair

despair of effecting, a reunion with that country; on beneficial, just, and honourable terms.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be returned to the House of Commons, for the kind attention they have shewn to the petitions of the people, in unanimously passing a bill for the expulsion of contractors from a seat in that House; but, at the same time, they cannot help expressing their great mortification and disappointment on hearing that the other House have frustrated their good intentions, and thrown a damp on the hopes of the people, by passing a negative on it.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting, that the people of England have, and always had, a clear, unalienable, indefeasible right to an adequate and equal representation, as well as an annual election of their representatives, founded upon stronger grounds than that of any act or acts of Parliament; and that the attainment of those important constitutional objects is the most effectual expedient for restoring and securing the independence of Parliament.

Resolved, That it be an instruction of this meeting to our representatives in Parliament, Humphrey Sturt and George Pitt, Esquires, to use their best endeavours to procure an act for obtaining a more equal representation in Parliament, by the addition of at least one hundred members, to be chosen in a due proportion by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

Resolved,

Resolved, That it be an instruction of this meeting to our representatives in Parliament, Humphrey Sturt and George Pitt, Esquires, to use their best endeavours to procure an act for shortening the duration of Parliament to a term not exceeding three years.

Resolved, That the Committee appointed by the last general meeting, together with Lord Temple, Lord Spencer, Lord Althorpe, Mr. Brand Hollis, Mr. Halfey, Mr. Randal, Mr. J. Chaffery, Dr. Tucker, Mr. James, Rev. Mr. Storey, Mr. White, Mr. Wray, Mr. Gallop, Dr. Gallop, Mr. Cozens, and Mr. Shirley be a Committee of Association; and that nine or more be empowered to act as a Committee, to add to their number, and to take such legal and constitutional measures as to them shall appear most expedient for promoting the objects of this Association.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting, that the prosecution of an offensive war with America is most evidently a measure which, by employing our great and enormously expensive military operations against the inhabitants of that country, prevents this from exerting its united, vigorous, and firm efforts against the powers of France and Spain, and has no other effect upon America than to continue, and thereby to increase, the enmity which has so long and so fatally subsisted betwixt the arms of both; can be productive of no good whatsoever, but, by preventing

venting conciliation, threatens the accomplishment of the final ruin of the British Empire.

Resolved, That in order to remove any prejudices which may have been imbibed respecting the intentions of this meeting, the gentlemen present think it their duty to declare, that they do not, nor ever did, mean to promote the reform requested in their county petition of the 27th of January by any other mode than that of peaceable demeanor, constitutional loyalty, and respectful attention to the legislature; and that it was, and is, their only endeavour, by promoting integrity and œconomy in every department of government, to apply the whole of the revenue to the necessities of the state; to restore dignity to the Crown, independence to the Legislature, and confidence to the People. Upon these principles, and these alone, they hope and wish to meet the concurrence and support of all virtuous and independent Englishmen.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to Sir George Savile, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, Mr. Dunning, Mr. Thomas Pitt, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Crewe, for their several bills brought into Parliament, and for their strenuous support of the cause of the people.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Chairman, for his diligence and attention, and for his readiness to accept the chair again.

Resolved, That this meeting be adjourned, sine die, subject to the call of the Chairman.

D. PARRY, Chairman.

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Paper X.

Paper X.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Affociation, for the County of York, held on the 3d of May, 1780, pursuant to the adjournment of the Meeting on the 29th of March, 1780.

PRESENT,

Sir JAMES NORCLIFFE, Chairman -

Sir William Milner	Mr. M. C. St. Quintin
Mr. Morritt	Mr. Withers
Mr. J. S. Smith	Mr. Barlow
Mr. Dring	Rev. William Dealtry
Mr. Croft	Mr. Hill
Mr. Croft, jun.	Rev. John Preston
Rev. William Cayley	Mr. Saltmarsh, jun.—elected this day
Dr. Swainston	Mr. Shore, Norton
Mr. Foljambe	Mr. John Shore, Sheffield
Rev. John Bourne	Mr. Rawson, Wardes-End
Mr. Edmunds	Mr. Foljambe, Rotherham
Rev. R. Croft	Mr. Jackson, Wath
Mr. Grimston	Mr. Clay, Bridge-House
Mr. Thomas Grimston	Mr. Woodhead, Sheffield
Rev. J. Robinson	Sir John Ramsden, Byrom
Mr. Athorpe	Mr. Sayer, Halifax
Mr. Strickland of Boynton	Rev. Mr. Cookson, Mirfield
Mr. Sykes	Mr. Saltmarsh, Saltmarsh
Mr. John Milnes	Mr. Leech, Bradford
Mr. H. Osbaldeston	Mr. Lodge, Willow-Hall
Sir William Anderson	Mr. Richard Milnes, Flockton
Rev. L. Yarker	Mr. Hayes, Aislaby
Mr. Lloyd	Mr. Wormley, Riccall
Mr. Micklethwaite	Mr. Cotton, Haigh-Hall
Mr. Courtney	Mr. Baynes, Embay-Kirk
Mr. B. Foord	

Resolved,

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the forty-one Lords who supported the Contractor's bill on the 14th of April, and thereby shewed their attention to the wishes of the people, expressed in their petitions to the House of Commons.

Resolved, That the rejection of the above bill by the House of Lords, (more especially as it appears that a majority of the hereditary members of that House gave their votes in support of it) is a clear proof of the determination of his Majesty's Ministers to preserve, in its full extent, that unconstitutional influence of the Crown, which the House of Commons have declared ought to be diminished, and to prevent that redress of the grievances of the people, which the House of Commons have acknowledged it to be their duty immediately and effectually to provide.

Resolved, That any Minister who shall presume to advise his Majesty to prorogue or dissolve Parliament, until the House of Commons shall have fulfilled their promise to the people, of diminishing the influence, and correcting the other abuses complained of in the petitions, is, and ought to be considered as, an enemy to the liberties of his country.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to those members of the House of Commons who voted in support of the bill brought in by Mr. Crewe, for preventing revenue officers from voting at any future election.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to those members of both Houses of Parliament who (foreseeing, and forewarning their country of, the consequences) have uniformly opposed the coercion of America to unconditional submission; and that they be entreated to use their wisdom in accomplishing (and not to despair of effecting) a speedy re-union with that country, on beneficial, just, and honourable terms.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the present Sub-Committee to prepare a plan for preventing the expence of voters at elections.

Resolved, That the present Sub-Committee shall have power to call a General Meeting of the Freeholders of this county, by advertisement, as soon as the present Parliament shall be dissolved, without any previous Meeting of this General Committee.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

JAMES NORCLIFFE, Chairman
of the day.

*Paper XI.**Proceedings of the Westminster Committee.*

KING'S-ARMS TAVERN, *Palace-Yard*, March 13, 1780.

Resolved,

THAT by the resolution of the General Meeting, directing this Committee to "prepare a Plan of an Association, on legal and constitutional grounds, to support the laudable reform, and such other measures as may conduce to restore the freedom of Parliament,"

This Committee conceive themselves bound to enter into the consideration of every question tending to establish the Independency of Parliament, on a solid and durable basis.

Resolved, That the duration of Parliaments and the state of Representation of the People, are questions immediately under this description.

Resolved, That a Sub-Committee, consisting of seven persons, be appointed to inquire into the state of the Representation of this country, and to report the same to this Committee.

This Committee being informed that Lord North has given notice of his intention to bring a bill into Parliament for the appointment of a commission of accounts, to inspect and regulate

the expenditure of public money, subsequent to the notice given by Colonel Barre of a similar intention,

Resolved, That all Members of this Committee, being Members of Parliament, be requested to give the strictest and most diligent attention to the progress of the said bill; as from the unprecedented manner in which this business has been taken out of the hands of those from whom the proposal originated, as well as from the quarter upon which the future progress of it must now depend; there is the justest reason to suspect an intention of eluding the essential objects of the commission, and under a specious appearance of complying with part of the prayer of the Petitions, a design to evade and frustrate the important ends attainable by a measure so beneficial to the public interest, if honestly and effectually adopted.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Committee that the civil list revenue was given for the honour of the Crown, and the advantage of the people, and is, and ought to be, subject to the controul of Parliament; and that the thanks of this Committee be given to the 202 Members of the House of Commons who supported the right of such controul, by voting for the abolition of the unnecessary Office of Third Secretary of State, and the various offices in that department.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee

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be given to the 208 Members who composed the majority in the House of Commons, on Monday last, and who established the right of Parliament to controul the Civil List, in the abolition of the useless offices of the Eight Lords of Trade.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to John Crewe, Esq; for having made a motion in the House of Commons, on Tuesday last, for a bill to exclude Revenue Officers from voting at elections; a measure tending to promote one of the great objects of the Petition of this city, by diminishing the undue and unconstitutional influence of the Crown.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Hon. Charles James Fox, for presenting to the House of Commons the Petition of the inhabitants of the city and liberty of Westminster, and for his speech on that occasion.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Monday next, precisely at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, then to proceed to business.

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XII.

Proceedings of the Westminster Committee,

KING'S-ARMS TAVERN, March 20, 1780.

Report of the Sub-Committee, appointed to inquire into the State of the Representation of this Country.

SUB-COMMITTEE,

FREE-MASONS TAVERN, March 19, 1780.

Resolved,

THAT it appears to this Sub-Committee that *new Parliaments* to be holden once in every year were the antient usage, and declared to be the hereditary and indefeasible right of the People of England.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that the act passed in the sixth year of the reign of William and Mary, is the first regular act which attempts to establish and "appoint the time of continuance of Parliament," to be for the term of three years, though the same act recognizes 'the antient laws and statutes of this kingdom,' by which annual Parliaments were confirmed, and declares "that *frequent* and *new* Parliaments tend very much to the happy union and good agreement of the King and People."

That

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that by an act passed in the first year of the reign of George I. the Parliament then chosen for *three years* (by the *acquiescence* of the people to the above-mentioned act of William and Mary, *on the faith* of its declaring that "from thenceforth no Parliament whatsoever, that shall at any time hereafter be called, assembled, or held, shall have any continuance longer than for *three years only at the farthest*,") did pass an act to prolong its continuance to the term of seven years.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that *temporary* considerations then presumed to exist in the country, are stated in the preamble to the act, as the principal motives and inducements for the act itself.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that the act passed in the sixth of William and Mary, is worded, as if declaratory of what was conceived (however falsely) to have been the constitution of the country; but that the *septennial act* assumes a power of altering the duration of Parliaments at pleasure.

That these alterations, in the Constitution of Parliament, were made without communication with the constituent Body of the People, and have been continued without the sanction of their approbation.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that the septennial bill was strongly opposed in Parliament, as "a direct infringement on the Constitution,

situation, and a flagrant breach of trust, towards the constituent Body."

That it was supported almost entirely on the principal of *expediency*.

That the voice of THE PEOPLE appeared strongly against it in many respectable Petitions to Parliament on the occasion, and that a constitutional protest was entered by the Peers, stating "That frequent Parliaments were the *fundamental constitution* of the kingdom: that the House of Commons ought to be chosen by the people, and when continued for a longer time than they were chosen for, they were then chosen by the Parliament, and not by the people: that they conceived the bill, so far from preventing corruption, would rather increase it, for the longer a Parliament was to last, the more valuable to corruptors would be the purchase; and that all the reasons that had been given for long Parliaments might be given for making them perpetual, which would be an absolute subversion of the Third Estate."

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that various motions were afterwards made, and strongly supported 'for a repeal of the septennial act;' particularly a motion for '*annual Parliaments*' in 1744, which was lost only by a majority of thirty-two.

That the city of London, and other respectable bodies, continued to instruct their Representatives, to prosecute this object "in the most vigorous

vigorous manner, as essentially necessary to the independency and integrity of Parliament, the rights of the People, and the prosperity of the Country."

That with respect to the Representation of the People,

It appears to this Sub-Committee, that by stat. 8. Hen. VI. the Parliament, then elected by the commonalty at large, passed an act to disfranchise the greater part of their constituents, by limiting the right of election for Knights of the Shire, to "persons having free lands or tenements, to the value of 40s. by the year at the least;" which restriction has ever since continued.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that many towns and boroughs, formerly intitled "for their repute and population," to send Members to Parliament, have since fallen into decay, yet continue to have a representation equal to the most opulent counties and cities; while other towns and places, which have risen into consideration, and become populous and wealthy, have no Representatives in Parliament.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that according to the most received calculations, the number of inhabitants of England and Wales is above five millions.

That of these, nearly twelve hundred thousand are supposed capable of voting, as the constitution stood before the restrictive act above quoted.

That

That of this number, not more than two hundred and fourteen thousand are at present admitted to vote.

That out of these—

One hundred and thirty thousand freeholders elect ninety-two members for fifty-two counties.

Forty-three thousand citizens, freemen, and others, elect fifty-two members for twenty-three cities and two universities.

And forty-one thousand electors choose three hundred and sixty-nine members for one hundred and ninety-two towns and boroughs.

That fifty of these members are returned by three hundred and forty electors.

And a number scarcely above six thousand, being a majority of the voters of a hundred and twenty-nine of the boroughs, return two hundred and fifty-seven representatives, which is a majority of the whole English House of Commons, and the efficient representation of above five millions of people.

That it appears to this Sub-Committee, that many of these boroughs are immediately under the influence of the Crown, as the Cinque Ports; many of them private property, affording hereditary seats, as those under burgage tenure, and some of them almost without houses or inhabitants, as Gatton, Newtown, and Old Sarum.

That considering the representation with reference to property, it appears that many counties return a number of representatives, out of
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all proportion to what they contribute to the public revenue, as is evident from the stating a single instance—That Cornwall has been calculated to pay to land-tax and subsidy, sixteen parts, out of five hundred and thirteen, and sends members to Parliament forty-four, while Middlesex pays not less than in the proportion of two hundred and fifty-six, and sends members eight.

So that it appears to this Sub-Committee, that the inequality of the representation of this country, with regard to property, is still greater than when estimated according to the number of its inhabitants.

Signed, by order of the Sub-Committee,
R. B. SHERIDAN, Chairman.

Resolved, That annual Parliaments are the undoubted right of the People of England, and that the act which prolonged their duration, was subversive of the constitution, and a violation on the part of the Representatives of the sacred trust reposed in them by their Constituents.

Resolved, That the present state of the representation of this country is inadequate to the object, and a departure from the first principles of the constitution.

Resolved, That thanks be given to the Chairman and Members of the Sub-Committee, for the

the very intelligent report made by them of the state of the representation of this country, and of the duration of Parliaments.

Resolved, That the report of the Sub-Committee be printed, and copies sent to the several Committees of the counties, cities, and boroughs of this kingdom.

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XIII.

Proceedings of the Westminster Committee.

KING'S-ARMS TAVERN, March 25, 1789.

Resolved,

THAT it is the opinion of this Committee, that there should be sent to the House of Commons, in addition to the present Representatives of counties, a number of Members, not less than one hundred, to be chosen, in a due proportion, by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

That it is the opinion of this Committee, that it be most earnestly recommended to the electors of this city, to support at the ensuing General Election, such Candidates to represent them in Parliament, as shall, previous to the election,

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by signing an Association, or otherwise, have satisfied them, that they will support the above important regulation in Parliament, or so much thereof as shall not be obtained in the present Parliament.

That it be most earnestly recommended to all Members of Parliament, who are friends to the above-mentioned plan of reform, to use their utmost endeavours in this present Session of Parliament, to obtain the objects of that plan.

Resolved, That this Committee will, on Monday, April 3, consider of a plan for a General Association.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, Thomas Grenville, and Thomas Brand Hollis, Esqrs. the Members deputed from this Committee to the General Meeting of Deputies, for the diligent discharge of their duty.

Resolved, That Sir Cecil Wray, Mr. Brand Hollis, and Dr. Jebb, be deputed to acquaint the Earl of Shelbourne with the strong sense that this Committee entertains of the manly support which his Lordship has constantly and uniformly given to the cause of the People, and particularly during this Session of Parliament; and at the same time to express the great concern which they have lately felt at the danger to which so valuable a life has been exposed, in consequence of the faithful and spirited discharge of his duty as a Peer of Parliament.

Resolved,

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Monday the 3d of April next, precisely at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XIV.

Resolutions at a General Meeting of the City of Westminster, on the 6th day of April, 1780.

The Honourable C. J. FOX, in the Chair.

Resolved,

THAT the Form of Association, agreed to by the Committee of Correspondence to be submitted to the adjourned General Meeting of the city and liberties of Westminster, be now read.*

Resolved, That it be an instruction to the Committee to take the most effectual measures for supporting the election of the Hon. Charles James Fox, the Chairman of this Meeting, at the ensuing General Election.

Resolved,

* The Form of Association and six first Resolutions are omitted, being similar to those agreed on at York.

Resolved, That the inhabitants paying taxes to government, who live in the suburbs of the city and liberties of Westminster, viz. in such streets, squares, or places, as are adjacent to, or in the neighbourhood of, the said city and liberties, and not within the city or liberties of London, be admitted to accede to this Association.

Resolved, That Major Cartwright be added to the Committee.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Chairman.

Resolved, That this Meeting be adjourned, subject to a call by the Committee of Association.

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XV.

Circular Letter from the Hon. C. J. Fox, to the Chairmen of the several Committees throughout the kingdom.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour of transmitting to you a copy of the proceedings in Westminster-Hall, on the 6th instant, in which you will observe, that the Form of the Association, adopted by the city of Westminster, is nearly

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similar

similar to that of the county of York. There never was a time when union was more necessary than the present, as the only hopes of those who wish to defeat the wishes of the people are professedly founded upon supposed disagreements among the true friends of this country.

I should long ago have transmitted, to your Committee, lists of the Members who have voted in the late important question, but have been unable to procure any on which I could depend. That which was printed in the news-papers was, to my own knowledge, very incorrect. I cannot close my letter without informing you, that the three following resolutions were agreed to, by the House of Commons, on the 6th instant:

1. That it is necessary to declare that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.

2. That it is competent, to this House, to examine into and to correct abuses in the expenditure of the Civil List revenues, as well as in every other branch of the Public revenue, whenever it shall appear expedient to the wisdom of this House so to do.

3. That it is the duty of this House to provide, as far as may be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented to this House, from the different counties, cities, and towns of this kingdom.

The numbers who voted, for them were 233, against them 215; so that in one of the fullest

Houses

Houses that we have ever known, a compleat approbation has been given to the sentiment of the petitions, with a promise to attend to their prayers; how that promise will be performed, it is our duty to watch; if we persevere in our exertions, I think there is little doubt of obtaining our objects,—but if we are lulled into security, by success, it is but too probable that the Representatives of the People may relapse into their former inattention to their Constituents.

I am, my Lord,

With great respect,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET, April 10, 1780.

Lord Viscount MAHON, Chairman of the Committee of the county of Kent.

*Paper XVI.***Resolutions of the Westminster Committee,***April 18, 1780.***Resolved,**

THAT the thanks of this Committee be given to the Hon. Charles James Fox, for his conduct as Chairman of the Committee of Correspondence, and that he be requested to take the Chair of the Committee of Association,

It appearing to this Committee, among other grievances established by those acts which prolonged the duration of Parliaments beyond their constitutional period, that it is a hardship both on the Constituent and Representative body, that no Member, however desirous, can vacate his seat in Parliament, or however unable he may become to attend his duty and execute the trust reposed in him, without having recourse to the subterfuge of applying for a nominal place; and it appearing that the Minister's power, in most cases, to grant or refuse such application, forms a part of that unconstitutional influence of which the petitions of the people complain,

complain, and which Parliament has "now declared ought to be diminished."

Resolved, That the Hon. Charles James Fox, Chairman of this Committee, be requested to prepare and bring into Parliament, as speedily as possible, a bill to enable any Member of the House of Commons to vacate his seat by such mode as shall seem best, so that a writ for a new election may be issued in consequence.

Resolved, That such Members of this Committee, as are Members of Parliament, be earnestly requested to support the above-mentioned bill.

Resolved, That it appears to this Committee, that the resolutions of the House of Commons on the 6th of April, viz. That it is necessary to declare, that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished:—That it is competent, to that House, to examine into and correct abuses in the expenditure of the Civil List revenue, as well as in every other branch of the Public revenue, whenever it shall appear expedient to the wisdom of that House so to do;—and that it is the duty of that House to provide, as far as may be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented to that House from the different counties, cities, and towns, of this kingdom; form a solemn pledge, to the Constituents, that they will unremittingly persevere in procuring solid and substantial redress to the various grievances of the People of England.

Resolved, That a Sub-Committee be appointed, consisting of five persons, to consider of and form, upon constitutional grounds, such proper plan for taking the suffrages of the people at the election of their Representatives in Parliament, as may prevent, as much as possible, bribery and undue influence in the electors and elected.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Chairman, for his letter* to the Chairmen of the several Committees, and that he be requested to print the same.

Resolved, That this Committee do meet on every Tuesday.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to John Dunning, Esq; for the several salutary and constitutional motions made by him in the House of Commons; asserting the right of that House to controul the expenditure of the Public revenue in all its branches; tending to the immediate redress of the grievances complained of in the petitions of the people; to diminish the corrupt influence of the Crown, so fatally prevalent in that House, and to restore the freedom and independence of Parliament.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Thomas Pitt, Esq; for having moved in a Committee of the House of Commons, on Thursday the 6th instant,—That it is the duty of

* The Circular Letter, here alluded to, is inserted at page 221.

of this House to provide, as far as may be, an effectual and immediate redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented to the House, from the counties, cities, and towns, in this kingdom.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Lords who voted against the rejection of the Contractor's bill; a law judiciously devised, and prudently adopted by the Commons of Great-Britain, in compliance with the just prayer of their Constituents, as tending to reduce the unconstitutional influence of the Crown, and in some measure to restore the independence of Parliament.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to David Hartley, Esq; for a bill brought by him into Parliament, for excluding certain placemen from the House of Commons.

Resolved, That copies of the Form of Association, agreed to by the General Meeting of this city and liberties, do lie at the following places, to receive the signature of such of the inhabitants of this city and liberties, and of the suburbs thereof, as shall think proper to sign the same :

Brawn's-Head, Bond-street; King's-Arms Tavern, Palace-yard, Westminster; Free Mason's Tavern, Great Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Tuesday next, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XVII.

Report of the Sub-Committee of Westminster,

May 27, 1780.

THE Sub-Committee having duly examined the various statutes of this realm, respecting the election of Members to serve in the Commons House of Parliament, more particularly such as were enacted for the purpose of guarding against the prevalence of bribery and corruption at elections, and the operation of every other species of undue influence upon the electors and elected; and reflecting upon the inefficacy of these provisions with respect to the prevention of evils, which threaten the final extinction of our liberties, *are decidedly of opinion*, That no effectual reformation of the abuses in question can take place, unless the people exercise their inherent and undoubted right of reviewing the whole plan of delegation, and, by recurring to the first principles of our constitution, again establish it upon its ancient foundations of equity and right reason.

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When error has obtained the sanction of time, it appears to the unthinking mind under the semblance of truth; and even men of reflection, who have formed a just conception of its nature and its tendency, are in such circumstances alarmed with apprehensions at the first attempts for its correction. However, as the consequences of error, in proportion to its magnitude and extent of operation, are manifestly evil; and as constitutional errors may therefore be supposed to be unavoidably productive of national calamity;—it is surely more prudent, in the proper season, to submit to the perhaps imaginary inconveniences of a reformation, than to suspend our exertions until we are obliged to encounter those accumulated miseries which an obstinate perseverance in an acknowledged course of error must derive upon both Prince and People.

The prevalence of evil in the present hour proves the prevalence of error; and it does not require any extraordinary degree of sagacity in the politician and philosopher to discover, that the primary error, and the fruitful source of the many evils which we feel, consists in a departure from fundamental principles, in the present constitution of the Commons' House of Parliament; in consequence of which, it is no longer obedient to the will, or speaks the language of the great constituent body of the people.

Every application, therefore, for the redress of the present grievances of the nation, that shall be made

made to a body of men no longer under the influence of their constituents, but on the contrary uniformly acting in subserviency to the views and interests of the Crown, must of necessity be unsuccessful; and, from the natural effect of dis-appointment upon the human mind, will probably impair the vigour of every future exertion.

Application to the Crown to suspend the exertions of its influence, or to repair the breaches made in that part of the constitution which was intended to be the bulwark of the people against its encroachments, presupposes such an ignorance of the principles which, in certain circumstances, are found invariably to actuate the human heart, that one would be led to imagine the use of argument would be superseded by the obvious absurdity of the expedient.

The event of the experiment, frequently repeated, has confirmed the conclusion which right reason would have suggested; and it now stands a truth, recorded for the benefit of every future generation, that when the point in question is a redress of grievances, originating in oppression, or a restitution of the rights and privileges of the people, millions sue in vain.

To what earthly tribunal, therefore, shall an injured people have resort in this alarming moment, when a desperate faction, in the midst of public calamity and distress, has manifested a determined purpose of persevering in a line of conduct which, if persisted in, must inevitably end
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in the subversion of our liberties, and the desolation of our state? The sun of England's glory perhaps soon may set, to rise no more!

One hope still remains in the native energy of the great collective body of the people, the native energy of a race of men who have always stood distinguished in the annals of nations for every liberal sentiment, and every generous principle that can dignify our kind.

The peaceful efforts of this mighty power, acting by Committees freely chosen, are sufficient, under the providence of Heaven, to re-establish the constitution in its ancient vigour.—The public state of affairs requires this exertion; the public voice at length appears disposed to bear its testimony to this important truth; viz.

That the restoration of the Commons' House of Parliament to freedom and independency, by the interposition of the great collective body of the nation, is essentially necessary to our existence as a free people.

The circumstances of the times, and the peculiar nature of the means, which must be employed for effecting our deliverance, require, that the proposed plan be exhibited complete in all its essential forms; and that its various parts being combined in strict and necessary union with each other, be established at one and the same moment of time.

When we cast our eyes upon the conduct of
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the present Commons' House of Parliament;—when we behold a majority of its Members, in defiance of our petitions and their own solemn declaration, persist in increasing the burdens of the people, and in a steadfast purpose of opposing every measure of redress, desponding apprehensions may for a time take place in the minds of the best and bravest of our countrymen. Reflection, however, will disclose a more pleasing prospect, arising from the very extremity of our distress: More vigorous councils, and an happy unanimity, will be the unavoidable result; the alarm of the nobility for the very existence of their present splendid distinctions will co-operate with the poignant feelings of the people; and every rank and description of men will feel the propriety, the necessity, of establishing that plan of Parliamentary reformation, which holds forth our best and indeed our only security against the all-devouring influence of the Crown.

Political truth, like the moral feelings of the soul, is plain and simple; it recommends itself powerfully to the general sentiment—and, when unveiled in its intrinsic purity, will assuredly call forth the animated exertions of millions in its support.

An equal representation of the people in the great council of the nation, annual elections, and the universal right of suffrage, appear so reasonable to the natural feelings of mankind, that no sophistry can elude the force of the arguments which

which are urged in their favour; and they are rights of so transcendent a nature, that, in opposition to the claim of the people to their enjoyment, the longest period of prescription is pleaded in vain. They were substantially enjoyed in the times of the immortal Alfred; they were cherished by the wisest Princes of the Norman line; they form the grand palladium of our nation; they ought not to be esteemed the grant of Royal favour, nor were they, at first, extorted by violence from the hand of power: they are the birth-right of Englishmen, their best inheritance, which, without the complicated crimes of treason to their country, and injustice to their posterity, they cannot alienate or resign: they form that triple cord of strength which alone can be relied on to hold, in times of tempest, the vessel of the State.

With respect to the expediency of reforming the representation of this country, and of recurring to the constitutional practice of annually electing the persons sent to Parliament, the Subcommittee observe,

That the General Meeting of the Deputies, on the 17th of March, decided, in the affirmative, upon the propriety of these measures, with unanimous voice; that the Committee, from which this body received its instructions, have, with similar unanimity, given their suffrages to the same sentiment; and that the General Meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster, upon the 6th
of

of April, declared "That the People of England have, and always had, a clear, unalienable, inalienable right to an annual election of their Representatives, as well as to an adequate and equal representation, founded upon stronger grounds than that of any act or acts of Parliament; and that the attainment of these important constitutional objects is the most effectual expedient for restoring and securing the independency of Parliament."

With regard to the restitution of the universal right of suffrage, the Sub-Committee conceive, that the reasonableness and expediency of the measure will probably be more apparent, if the full extent and magnitude of those powers be considered, which are entrusted to the Representative by the Constituent Body.

The doctrine, that representation and taxation are inseparable, is founded in truth; but the undue preference that has been afforded to the rights of property, in various discussions of this subject, has tended to keep out of sight other principles, equally essential to a just conception of this question.

A portion of the soil, a portion of its produce, may be wanting to many; but every man has an interest in his life, his liberty, his kindred, and his country; and when laws affecting these are made by persons, to whom he hath not delegated the power, each of these possessions, which are as substantial, as if, like land or money,

ney, they were the objects of the senses, may be invaded, and probably would be invaded by those, who, being possessed of property, the grand enchantress of the world, would thereby be enabled more successfully to gratify that lust of despotic power, which so strongly characterizes the human heart.

The exercise of the poor man's elective right is therefore essential to his freedom; and altho', in ordinary cases, he may sometimes dispose of his suffrage without a proper regard to its importance, yet, when public calamity demonstrates, that public confidence has been abused, the opportunity of rectifying the evil by a more judicious delegation will probably not be neglected. Common sense will instruct him that his own free and unbiassed voice, united with the voices of that numerous class of fellow citizens, who are his fellow sufferers at such a period, will prevail over the interested opposition of the tyrants of their species, and finally establish the real friends of humanity and of their country in the seat of power.

It may also be observed, that no consideration would have a stronger tendency to generate proper sentiments of affection to the community, and more effectually recall the minds of the rising generation from a course of dissipation and attachment to unworthy gratification, than the perception of that share of political consequence, which the restitution of the universal right of suffrage would afford,

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At a certain age all the male inhabitants of this kingdom, with a few exceptions, are subject to the obligation of serving in the militia. Shall a man therefore be thought unworthy of a suffrage in the election of his Representative, and at the same time shall his fellow citizens intrust to his fidelity and courage whatever they hold dear? Is it reasonable to deny to a citizen, when he has attained to maturity in his mental capacity, the common privilege of a freeman, the right of being governed by laws, to which the assent of himself, or his Representative, has been obtained, and at the same time to avail ourselves of his bodily strength? Is it generous, is it politic, to treat him as an alien in the community, at the moment he may be ornamenting it by the powers of his understanding, or defending it by his arms?

Urged by the force of these reflections, your Sub-Committee have considered the points proposed to their deliberation in their full extent. They have examined the voluminous system of laws relating to the subject of Parliamentary elections, and find themselves under a necessity of pronouncing the far greater part of them to be founded upon partial conceptions, unjust restrictions, and false measures of expediency, which will not stand the test, when contrasted by the acknowledged principles of the Constitution of this country.

More

More particularly, it appears to your Sub-Committee,

1. That through the joint operation of the statute of disfranchisement, passed in the 8th year of the reign of Henry VI. and the triennial bill of the 6th of William and Mary, which attempted to give the first legal sanction to the continuance of the same Parliament beyond the period of a single Session, the representation of the Commons of England is virtually annihilated; and an institution, which was intended to be the People's defence against Aristocratic domination, or regal despotism, is now become an engine in the hands of the Minister, to tax, oppress, insult, and enslave, the People of this country.

2. That the present inequality in the representation in a great measure originates in an arbitrary exercise of the Royal prerogative, whereby, in opposition to the clearest principles of the Constitution, the Crown presumed to authorise, at pleasure, certain incorporated bodies to send Members to the Commons' House of Parliament; the unsuspecting people of this country at the same time not attending to the inequality, that from thence must necessarily take place in the representation, to the substantial injury of themselves, and every succeeding generation.

That in consequence of the decay of many of these Corporations, and through the partiality

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of the Crown, in various periods of our history, to its own tenants and dependants, there is at this time a degree of representation enjoyed by many boroughs of this kingdom, far exceeding the bounds of due proportion, and too dangerous to the public freedom to be longer endured.

3. That more than seventy acts of Parliament have been passed since the first invasion of the liberties of Englishmen, in the reign of Henry VI. for the purpose of regulating elections—that tumults and disorders, bribery, perjury, and false returns, with a long train of other attendant evils, have been multiplied, in proportion as the acts were multiplied, which, under pretence of removing these evils, have in fact perpetuated them, and at the same time have abolished, and almost obliterated the remembrance of the universal right of suffrage, which forms one of the most important franchises of the English people.

4. That every attempt to banish bribery and corruption, and undue influence, while the present restrictions of the right of suffrage, and imperfect representation in a septennial Parliament shall subsist, would only be calculated to deceive and amuse the nation to its final destruction.

5. That instead of adding to the number of our statutes, by regulations incompetent to the purpose proposed, reformation should commence with the rescinding and abolishing of the injurious acts and illegal customs above-mentioned: thus would the Constitution, as if delivered
from

from an oppressive weight that impedes its exertions, recover its energies; while the principles, on which it is founded, would suggest a simple, practicable, and effectual plan for regulating those elections, on which our freedom, our happiness, and our very national existence must depend.

Governed by these considerations, the Subcommittee have framed the following plan, in which they have made it their chief effort plainly to express every material provision for securing the free election of an independent House of Parliament—they have studiously avoided entering into a detail—they have suggested, to the best of their ability, a plan founded upon constitutional principles, and the common rights of mankind—a plan expedient in our present circumstances, and which may with facility be carried into execution by the spirited, yet pacific efforts of the people; provided their breasts are informed with the same sentiments of public virtue, and ardent love of liberty, which have hitherto animated the exertions of the English nation.

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Plan

*Plan for taking the Suffrages of the People, at the
Election of Representatives to serve in Par-
liament.*

1. THAT each county be divided into as many districts as it is intitled to elect Representatives, each district chusing one Representative.
2. That the division of the county into districts be constituted in such a manner, that each district contain nearly an equal number of males competent to vote in elections; regard being had, as much as may be, to the parochial divisions of the kingdom, so that each division comprehend a certain number of parishes:—And, moreover, that each district receive its denomination from the parish containing the greatest number of electors.
3. That the election of Representatives to serve in Parliament be held annually through England and Wales, upon the first Tuesday in July; that the election commence between the hours of eight and eleven, and be finally closed before sun-set of the same day.
4. That all the male inhabitants of this country (aliens, minors, criminals, and insane persons excepted) be admitted to vote at the election of Representatives, subject only to the forms, provisions, and regulations specified in this report.
5. That the number of Representatives, re-
turned

turned by the inhabitants of each county of England and Wales, be settled for the term of seven years next ensuing, according to the following schedule, viz.

That the county of Rutland, and the two Universities, re- turn each two Representatives	} 2—6
The counties of Huntingdon and Westmoreland, each three	3—6
The county of Bedford, five	5—5
Berkshire, Cumberland, Herefordshire, each six	6—18
Bucks, Cambridgeshire with Ely, Hertfordshire, Dorset, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, each seven	} 7—43
Leicestershire	8—8
Suffex, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, each nine	9—27
Cheshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Sa- lop, Staffordshire, each ten	} 10—60
Hampshire, Wilts, each eleven	11—22
Gloucestershire, thirteen	13—13
Essex, Surry with Southwark, each sixteen	16—32
Lincolnshire, seventeen	17—17
Kent, Lancashire, Somerset, Suffolk, each eighteen	18—72
Durham Bishopric with Northumberland, Devon, each twenty-one	} 21—42
Norfolk, twenty-two	22—22
Wales with Monmouth, thirty	30—30
Middlesex with London and Westminster, forty-five	45—45
Yorkshire, forty-six	46—46
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Total,	513

6. That an exact roll be kept of the male inhabitants competent to vote in each parish, continued down to the first Tuesday in June; and that no person be permitted to give his suffrage, whose name is not found in that roll. That this roll be delivered in upon oath of the clergyman,
 Q3 church.

churchwardens, or other officers of the parish, to the churchwardens of that parish of the district where the poll is taken.

7. That the sheriff, together with all the justices of the peace, mayor, aldermen, and magistrates, form in each county a grand inquest, for allotting the districts in due proportion to the male inhabitants competent to vote, and for denominating the same; and that such inquest be finally settled, and notice of the allotment given to each parish comprehended in the district, within the term of ten days after the first Tuesday in June.

8. That the election of the Representatives of the people be made at the principal town or village of the district.

9. That the poll of each district be taken by ballot, under the conduct of the churchwardens of the parish in the district where the election is made.

10. The churchwardens of the district, at the close of the poll, shall declare the name of the person elected, and certify the same to the sheriff, in order to its being transmitted to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery.

11. That the annual session of Parliament shall commence upon the first Thursday in November, unless some extraordinary event, or urgent national business, should make it indisputably requisite for the Crown to assemble it before the stated period.

12. That

12. That the session terminate upon the last day of April, unless the national business should be sooner dispatched; the Crown, nevertheless, having power to prolong the session beyond the stated period, if any urgent business remain unfinished—in which case, the Parliament may continue its sitting to the first Tuesday in July.

13. That all Members of the Commons' House of Parliament, before taking their seats, declare upon oath, That they do not hold any office or emolument at the will of the Crown, or its servants, or any Lord of Parliament; that they will give due attendance to business, and act with all fidelity to the people, in the discharge of their important trust.

14. That all Members serving in Parliament be entitled to reasonable wages, according to the wholesome practice of ancient times.

15. That all election causes be finally decided by Jury, before the Judges of Assize.

16. That every person, competent to give his suffrage as an elector, be also esteemed qualified to be elected to serve his country in Parliament.

Signed, by order of the Sub-Committee,
T. BRAND HOLLIS, Chairman.

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Westminster

Westminster Committee.

KING'S ARMS TAVERN, *Palace-Yard*, June 13, 1780.

Resolved,

THAT the thanks of this Committee be given to the Duke of Richmond, for his late motion in favour of an annual, equal, and universal representation of the Commons; a measure which is founded on the broad basis of constitutional liberty, and the common rights of mankind; and would, in the opinion of this Committee, be immediately productive of that Parliamentary freedom and independency which it is the purpose of our Association to promote.

J. BRETT, Chairman
for the day.

KING'S ARMS TAVERN, *Palace-Yard*, Tuesday, July 18, 1780.

Resolved,

THAT the thanks of this Committee be given to the Chairman and Members of the Sub-Committee, for the very intelligent report made by them, relative to the election of Members to serve in the Commons' House of Parliament.

That the report of the Sub-Committee be printed, and copies sent to the several Committees of the counties, cities, and boroughs of this kingdom,

C. J. FOX, Chairman.

Paper XVIII.

Paper XVIII.

KENNET, Mayor.

Proceedings of the City of London.

THE Committee appointed by this Court, the 10th of February last, to correspond with the Committees appointed, or to be appointed, by the several counties, cities, and boroughs, in this kingdom, did this day deliver into this Court a report in writing, under their hands, with a Form of Association annexed, which were read in these words :

*To the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor, Aldermen,
and Commons, of the City of London, in
Common Council assembled.*

WE, whose names are here subscribed, your Committee, appointed by this Honourable Court, the 10th of February last, to correspond with the Committees appointed, or to be appointed, by the several counties, cities, and boroughs, in this kingdom, do certify,—that having received a letter from Mr. William Gray, jun. Clerk to the York Committee, inclosing a Form of Association, agreed to by the said Committee, the

28th

28th of March last, to be recommended to the General Meeting of the county of York: Your Committee have taken such Plan of Association into consideration, and having made some alterations therein, do approve and adopt the same as altered, which Plan they have hereunto annexed;* and your said Committee beg leave to recommend the same to this Honourable Court, as the most proper and eligible Plan that can be laid down for the purpose therein intended; and further, your Committee are of opinion that copies thereof should be circulated throughout the kingdom, and that the citizens of London, in particular, be invited to subscribe their names to such plan, which should be left at some convenient place or places for that purpose.

And your Committee further beg leave to recommend to this Honourable Court, a resolution which they have lately come to, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that annual Parliaments, or more often if need be, are the unalienable right of the People of England, and ought to be obtained in preference to any longer period." All which we submit to this Honourable Court, this 13th day of April, 1780.

William Saxby
John Withers
Josiah Donford
G. Bodley
William Hurford

Brass Crosby
James Townsend
John Sawbridge
J. Kirkman
N. Forster

Resolved,

* This altered Plan of Association being nearly the same as that of the county of York, it is not thought necessary to be reprinted here.

Resolved unanimously, That this Court doth agree with the Committee in their said report, and approve and adopt the Form of Association therein recommended.

Resolved unanimously, That the Town-Clerk do subscribe the said Form of Association, for and in the name of the Lord-Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the city of London, in Common Council assembled.

Resolved unanimously, That the said Form of Association be recommended to the citizens of the city of London, as a proper and necessary plan for them to subscribe and enter into, for effecting the salutary purposes mentioned in such Association; and that it be left at the Town-Clerk's office, to give the said citizens an opportunity of signing the same.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Court be given to those worthy Members of both Houses of Parliament, who, foreseeing and forewarning their country of the consequences, have uniformly opposed the coercion of America;— and that they be entreated to use their wisdom in accomplishing, and not even yet to despair of effecting, a re-union with that country, on beneficial, just, and honourable terms.

A Member presented to this Court an extract of a letter, from the late Earl of Chatham, to the late Earl Temple, dated April 17, 1774, which
was

was read, and ordered to be entered in the journal of this Court as follow:—

“ALLOW a speculator, in a great chair, to add, that a plan for more equal representation, by additional Knights of the Shire, seems highly seasonable; and to shorten the duration of Parliaments not less so. If your Lordship should approve, could Lord Lyttleton's caution be brought to taste those ideas, we should take possession of strong ground, let who will decline to follow us. One line of men, I am assured, will zealously support, and a respectable weight of law.”

“*Si quid novisti rectius istis
Candidus imperti.*”

Resolved unanimously, That the Committee appointed the 10th of February last, for corresponding with the Committees appointed or to be appointed by the several counties, cities, and boroughs in the kingdom, be continued as a Committee of Association, to carry on the necessary correspondence, and promote, by every legal means, the objects of such Association.

Ordered, That all the foregoing proceedings be signed by the Town Clerk, and published in the public papers.

RIX.

Paper XIX.

Paper XIX.

Resolutions *by the Constitutional Society at Nottingham, May 2, 1789.*

At a full Meeting, the following Resolutions were unanimously passed, viz,

THAT an equal representation is the right of the people, and essential to the very idea of a Representative Body.

That annual Parliaments are the old constitutional usage of Parliament, the true law of the land, and the best security which can be furnished for the virtuous conduct of Parliament, and for its independence on every power whatsoever, unless that of the people alone.

That the present inequalities in the representation of the people, and the continuance of Parliaments beyond a single session, are altogether a departure from, and a corruption of, the usage and law of Parliament.

That to recover Parliament to its constitutional character, by a more equal representation, and the return of annual Parliaments, is no romantic
object

object, but worthy of a free people to demand, as it is within their power to obtain, and is alone adequate to their wishes.

That the holding any place, pension, or contract, at the disposal of the Crown, (unless, perhaps, in some few instances, which may be expedient for the public business, and not dangerous to the public safety) is absolutely incompatible with a seat in the House of Commons.

That it is unworthy of the people of England, in their present state of discontent and alarm, to desist from that vigorous but legal prosecution of the reform contained in the preceding resolves; and that every thing which is essentially short of this, is but a mere temporary expedient, not affording even the promise of a permanent good to those kingdoms.

That no candidate to represent the town of Nottingham, or any county, town, or borough, whatever, in Parliament, who does not adopt the sentiments, and pledge himself by the honour of a man and of a Briton, for the recovery of the rights of the people, as expressed by the preceding resolves, (or so much of them as can be obtained) deserves, or shall receive, our vote or interest in any application for a seat in Parliament.

That the above are our firm resolves; we adopt the reform expressed therein in all its extent

tent: but if, in all its extent, it should be impracticable, we will thankfully receive so much of it as can be procured, and join our fellow-citizens in the pursuit of any part of so desirable an object.

That the thanks of this Society be conveyed to Major Cartwright, for his judicious and manly conduct in every thing which affects the liberties of the people; and that this Society will be happy to give him every expression of their esteem and gratitude which shall be in their power.

S. HAYWOOD, Secretary.

Paper XX.

Paper XX.

*Proceedings at a General Meeting of the County
of Kent.*

At a very numerous and respectable Meeting
of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders
of the said county, held at the Court-House
at Maidstone, on the 3d day of July, 1780,
agreeable to a public advertisement from
the Sheriff.

ROBERT BURROW, Esq; the Sheriff,
in the Chair.

Resolved unanimously,

THAT the Hon. Charles Marsham be put in
nomination as one of the Candidates to
represent this county in the next Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That Filmer Honey-
wood, Esq; be put in nomination as one of the
Candidates to represent this county in the next
Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That the Hon. Charles
Marsham and Filmer Honeywood, Esq; be ap-
proved, by this Meeting, as joint Candidates to
be

be put in nomination to represent the county of Kent in Parliament, at the ensuing General Election.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Honourable Charles Marlham, for his honest, upright, and independent conduct in Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to Robert Burrow, Esq; the Sheriff of the county, for his readiness to comply with the wishes of the county, by calling this Meeting; and also for his candid conduct at the same.

ROBERT BURROW, Sheriff.

Lord Viscount Mahon, the Chairman of the Kentish Committee, having informed the Meeting, that he was directed, by the Committee, to make their report to the Meeting; John Carter, Esq; was unanimously voted in the Chair.

Resolved unanimously, That the following propositions do deserve the steadiest and warmest support of the friends of the Constitutional liberty of this country, and that they would be highly conducive to the restoring the independence of Parliament, and to the securing the freedom and rights of the people, viz.

1st. The oeconomical reform requested by the petitions of the people; that plan of strict and rigid frugality now indispensibly necessary in

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every

every department of the State; that most important regulation for reducing the Constitutional influence of the Crown.

2dly. The proposition for obtaining a more equal Representation in Parliament, by the addition of at least one hundred Members, to be chosen, in a due proportion, by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

3dly. The proposition for Members of the House of Commons to be elected to serve in Parliament for a term not exceeding three years.

Resolved unanimously, That the Committee, appointed at the last General Meeting of this county, be confirmed by this Meeting with all the powers that the Committee had before; in order effectually to promote the objects of the Petition of this county, to the Honourable the House of Commons, and also all the resolves of this Meeting, by all legal and constitutional means.

Resolved, by a very great majority, That it is the opinion of this Meeting, that it be strongly recommended to all Noblemen, Gentlemen, Yeomen, Freeholders, and Householders, in the county of Kent, and to the sons of such persons, to provide themselves with a good musquet and bayonet, for the purpose of strengthening the Civil Power, and to act, according to law, in maintaining the peace of the said county; so that good order may, without the aid or interposition

position of any military force, be effectually preserved within the same.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to John Carter, Esq; the Chairman.

JOHN CARTER, Chairman
of the Meeting.

Committee of the County of Kent.

STAR-INN, MAIDSTONE, July 3, 1780.

Resolved unanimously,

THAT Lord Viscount Mahon, Stephen Beekingham, Esq; Charles Robinson, Esq; the Rev. Dr. Richard Rycroft, and Thomas Streatfield, Esq; be deputed, from this Committee, to confer with Deputies from other Committees, either in the city of London or in the city of Westminster, and to report to this Committee.

Resolved unanimously, That Abraham Atkins, Esq; William Borman, Esq; Richard Coleman, Esq; Charles Lefebure, Esq; and John Cockain Sole, Esq; be added to this Committee.

Resolved unanimously, That the Committee do adjourn, *sine die*, subject to the call of the Chairman, upon application of any three Members of this Committee.

MAHON, Chairman of the
Committee.

Paper XXI.

Proceedings of the Devon Committee.

CASTLE OF EXETER, July 7, 1780.

AT a Meeting this day held, pursuant to adjournment,—

Read, letter from the Chairman of the Dorset Committee, and copy of their last resolutions inclosed.

Resolved, That this Committee do declare their utmost abhorrence of the tumults which have lately disgraced the capital of this Empire, and earnestly hope and trust, that tranquillity and legal government will be speedily restored, that the ill-founded apprehensions of the uninformed may be removed, and that the prudent and lenient hand of wholesome laws will secure the Constitution of this free country, both ecclesiastical and civil.

Resolved, That our future endeavours be exerted in a steady perseverance to attain that reform in the expenditure of the public money, which has been the great foundation of our Association. That our opinion, on this point, has received the additional testimony of the House of Commons; and we feel too sensibly that the failure, in our full expectations on that head,

head, is wholly owing to that abuse of which we complain,—namely, That the influence of the Crown, by the means of its Ministers, has prevented that remedy to our distresses which every consideration calls upon the Legislature to apply.

Resolved, That as we do not flatter ourselves that the commission of accounts, appointed by the late act, promises the public that effectual redress which it wishes; that Mr. Burke be desired to present again, in the next Sessions of Parliament, his bill “for the better regulation of his Majesty’s civil establishments, and of certain public offices; for the limitation of pensions, and the suppressing of sundry useless, expensive, and inconvenient places, and for applying the monies, saved thereby, to the public service.” And that the Chairman be requested to write Mr. Burke accordingly.

Resolved, That the Chairman be requested to send a copy of these resolutions to the Chairmen of the several Committees of the counties of York, Gloucester, Hertford, Dorset, and of the city of Westminster.

Resolved, That John Honeywood, Esq; be added to the Committee.

Resolved, That the Committee do adjourn to the Thursday in the next Michaelmas sessions-week, being the 5th day of October next, at this place, at eleven o’clock in the forenoon; and that these resolutions be printed.

COURTENAY, Chairman.

Paper XXII.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association, for the County of York, held on the 2d day of August, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Mr. Strickland	Mr. Cradock
Rev. William Mason	Dr. Swainston
Mr. Marriott	Rev. H. Zouch
Rev. William Dealtry	Mr. Elsiey
Mr. P. Milnes	Mr. L. S. Lascelles
Mr. Lloyd	Rev. Fred. Dodsworth
Sir Robert Hildyard	Rev. Mr. Preston
Mr. Place	Mr. Cotton
Mr. Micklethwaite	Mr. Dring
Rev. L. Yarker	Mr. Hayes
Mr. Croft	Rev. James Wilkinson
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. Dixon
Rev. R. Croft	Mr. R. S. Milnes
Mr. Morritt	Mr. Shore
Mr. Courtney	Mr. William Jackson
Rev. William Cayley	Mr. Athorpe
Rev. John Dixon	Mr. Mathews, jun.
Mr. Rawfon	Rev. W. Comber
Mr. Booth	Sir William St. Quintin
Rev. John Robinson	Mr. C. St. Quintin
Mr. Baynes	Mr. Hildyard
Mr. Baynes, jun.	Mr. Edmunds
Mr. Foljambe	Mr. Tooker
Sir James Norcliffe	Mr. Stovin
Mr. S. Walker	The Earl of Effingham
Rev. Mr. Carver	Sir John Coghill
Mr. Duncombe	Mr. James Milnes, jun.
Mr. Henry Duncombe	Mr. Bell.
Mr. J. S. Smith	

Whereas from the late abominable outrages committed by the lowest classes of the populace in London, occasion hath been taken, by persons hostile

hostile to the just Rights and Freedom of the People, to defame the Association of this county, and of other counties and principal Corporations of England, as being calculated to produce similar acts of violence; notwithstanding the express and solemn declaration of their purpose, to support, *by legal and pacific methods*, the proposition for a reform *in the expenditure of public money*, and for a more equal Representation of the People, and a shorter duration of Parliament,

Resolved, That from whatever quarter those defamatory suggestions may have come, this Committee doth hold them in contempt, as misrepresentations vainly contrived to intimidate and deter the Associated Bodies from the prosecution of their just and necessary Plan of Public Reformation.

Resolved, That notwithstanding the rejection of every material regulation proposed to Parliament, during the last session, for introducing a more œconomical management of the public revenues, and effecting a proper diminution of the excessive influence of the Crown, in conformity to the wishes of the People, and to the vote of the House of Commons itself on the 6th of April last, this Committee doth confide in the firmness and energy of the nation; not doubting, but their steady perseverance in an orderly and legal support of the measures of their respective Associations will, in due time, be found effectual to obtain a complete redress of those alarming

evils; and also to correct the inveterate abuses in the *duration* of and *representation* in *Parliament*, which are the true origin and source of all our national grievances.

Resolved, That if on any future unhappy interruption of the public peace, orders shall be issued to the military force to disarm peaceable subjects, being Protestants, under any pretence of example or precedent drawn from any order given to that effect, during the late tumults in London, such orders ought not to be complied with, being contrary to the natural right of self-defence, contrary to the positive law of the land, and directly tending to the utter ruin of our liberties, by the introduction of a military government.

Resolved, That the interference of the military for the suppression of riots, not under the direction of the Civil Magistrate, but at the discretion of the Commanding Officer, is a dangerous deviation from the usual and constitutional practice during the reigns of the two first Princes of the House of Hanover, which the most urgent and evident necessity alone can render excusable.

Resolved, That however the order for the interference of the military at their discretion, for the suppression of the late riots in the metropolis, may have been unavoidable from the pressing circumstances of the case, viz. From the greatness of the danger, and the intimidation of the magistracy from the due execution of their office
in

in maintaining or restoring the public peace; yet the extension of similar orders to the army in other parts of the kingdom, where no pressing danger actually exists, and where no reluctance in the magistracy to perform their duty, can be reasonably suspected, cannot be justified on any real ground of necessity.

Resolved, That it is the dearest interest of every private subject, as well as his bounden duty by the law of the land, to exert himself according to his utmost ability, to maintain the peace of the country, so that good order may, without the aid or interposition of any military force, be effectually preserved within the same.

Resolved, That this Committee doth most earnestly recommend to all substantial householders to be ready and prepared, on the first appearance of any riotous commotion, to assist in maintaining peace and good order, under the directions of the Civil Magistrate,

Resolved, That this Committee will, at a future Meeting, proceed to a nomination of Delegates to attend in London next winter, to communicate with the Delegates of other Petitioning or Associated Bodies, on the means of carrying into effect the objects of their Petitions or Associations.

Resolved, That the following members be added to this Committee,

The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Effingham	Rev. Ben. Walker, Northallerton
C. Turner, Esq;	J. Anderson, Esq; Swainthwaite

DECLINED

DECLINED ACTING,

W. T. Jolliffe, Esq; Nun-Monckton W. Fenton, jun. Esq; Under-Bank
W. Waines, Esq; Little-Weighton William Buck, Esq; Halifax

Resolved, That the Rev. Mr. Yarker, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Dring, the Rev. Mr. Robinson, and the Rev. Mr. Preston, be a Sub-Committee, to receive the return of signatures to the Association, and draw up a general report of the numbers.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this Meeting be printed and published, and that the Chairman be desired to send copies thereof to the different Committees of petitioning or associated counties and districts.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned till to-morrow morning at half past nine o'clock.

C. WYVILL.

Paper XXIII.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association, for the County of York, on the 3d of August, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Mr. Foljambe
Mr. Courtney
Mr. Place
Mr. Rawson
Mr. Baynes
Mr. Baynes, jun.

Rev. John Robinson
Mr. H. Duncombe
Sir James Noreliffe
Mr. Cotton
Rev. Luke Yarker
Rev. John Dixon

Rev.

Rev. William Cayley
Mr. Ellsley
Mr. Dring
Mr. Marriott
Rev. W. Mason
Mr. J. S. Smith
Rev. Fred. Dodsworth
Mr. F. Smyth

Mr. Strickland
Mr. Croft
Mr. Hildyard
Rev. Robert Croft
Mr. Morritt
Rev. Henry Zouch
Rev. William Comber

Resolved, That Isaac Broadley, Esq; of Brantingham, be added to this Committee.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent by the Chairman to the Earl of Effingham, and a like letter (with the necessary alterations) to Charles Turner, Esq; with copies of the resolution of yesterday's Meeting, appointing them Members of the Committee:—

“ My Lord,

“ BY order of the Committee of Association, I have the honour to communicate to your Lordship the vote which admits you a Member of their Body.

“ When that Committee first met, to deliberate on a Plan for a Parliamentary Reform, in order to give security to our common liberties, they thought it, in the earliest stages of that business, improper to admit Members of either House of Parliament, as well out of delicacy to those Members themselves, as from other obvious considerations; But now, when that plan has been maturely digested and settled, such objections no longer subsist; and therefore it is with the greatest pleasure that they admit your Lordship

ship (who has already honoured the Association with your signature) to take a part in their deliberations.

I have the honour to be, &c."

Resolved, That as we do not flatter ourselves that the commission of accounts, appointed by the late act, promises the public that effectual redress which it wishes—that Mr. Burke be desired to present again, in the next session of Parliament, his bill "For the better regulation of his Majesty's civil establishments, and of certain public offices; for the limitation of pensions, and the suppressing of sundry useless, expensive, and inconvenient places; and for applying the monies saved thereby to the public service:" And that the Chairman be requested to write to Mr. Burke accordingly.

Resolved, That this Meeting do adjourn, subject to a call of not less than three Members of the Sub-Committee, whenever it shall seem necessary to them.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper XIV.

Paper XXIV.

*Letter from the EARL of EFFINGHAM to the Rev.
C. WYVILL.*

GRANGE, August 5, 1789

Dear Sir,

JUST as I was leaving York, I received your favour, acquainting me of the resolution taken by the Committee, to admit Members of Parliament, and their reason for it.

I entirely approved their not being chosen of the Committee at first, while reports were invisciously circulated concerning the intentions of the Meeting, as if what was the genuine effusion of patriotism, a sincere desire to restore and preserve our happy constitution, had been a mere party matter, solely calculated to serve the views of particular men,

I am now, Sir, of opinion with the Committee, that the former objection to Members of Parliament has ceased; but I have a stronger reason for agreeing with them, which I will explain.—

In the early part of this business, when it was only in contemplation, generally to correct the influence of the Crown, and the waste of public money, the necessity of those two objects was so universally admitted, that nothing seemed to remain but for the Members of Parliament to
frame

frame and introduce proper bills to accomplish the desired purpose.

But since that time, two points have been resolved on by the county, in pursuit of the general object, which points the electors alone have a right to decide on.

Nothing seems more clear, than that those who are to delegate a trust, have a right to determine not only the person to whom, but also the limitation under which, and the length of time for which, such trust shall be delegated; but however maturely such a plan may have been digested and settled, I am very much of opinion, that, if it is opposed, the carrying it into execution cannot be effected by any degree of talents or good intentions, without a great deal of knowledge and experience in the practice of that branch of the legislature where it must first come into consideration. I think the fate of some motions last session, sufficiently proves the truth of this observation.

I shall therefore conclude with my sincere wish, that we may be able to add to the Committee that experience which alone seems requisite;—I shall then indulge myself in the pleasing belief that their exertions will call forth a degree of public virtue, sufficient to restore our country, in some measure at least, to that enviable state from which we have, in the course of a few years, so miserably fallen.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard,

Your most faithful

And obedient servant,

EFFINGHAM.

*Paper XXV,***Heads of a Plan for preventing Bribery at
Elections in Boroughs.**

The following Thoughts are submitted to the
Committee of Association of the county
of York.

IT is proposed, that a Committee be appointed
for the special purpose of carrying into ef-
fect the resolution of the 28th of March, 1780,
relating to bribery and corruption in the several
boroughs of this kingdom.

The Committee of the county of York to set
the example in the county of York, in the fol-
lowing manner;

That the Committee do write a circular letter
to the Mayor, Bayliff, or other Chief Magistrate,
of each borough, requesting such Magistrate to
set on foot an Association or Declaration, and to
use his endeavours to procure the greatest num-
ber of signatures to such declaration on the part
of the voters of each borough, in form some-
thing like the following, viz.—We, the under-
written, being voters for the borough of —,

do enter into this Association and Declaration, that we will not take, or to the best of our power suffer to be given or taken, any bribe or gratuity for any vote at any election for Members of Parliament for this borough.

That the aforesaid Magistrate be desired to make a return to the Committee of the number of hands procured to such Association and Declaration, together with a list of the names and descriptions of the persons subscribing thereto.

That the Committee do write to the present Members for each borough, if they should stand again, and likewise to all such gentlemen as shall, from time to time, declare themselves Candidates for any borough within the county of York, requesting of such gentlemen to give an assurance and bond of honour, not to offer or give any bribe or gratuity to any voter at each borough respectively, together with any such declaration on his part as he may think proper to give of his disapprobation and disavowal of any such venal modes of proceeding.

That in the case of boroughs which are supposed to be under the influence of great families, or of private persons, the Committee do write to such persons, as to them shall seem proper, to request from them a declaration, in answer, of their concurrence with the same sentiments.

That all the aforesaid letters of correspondence, with

with their answers, shall be collected together, and that they shall be published at a proper time.

That a plan of these proceedings be transmitted to the Committees of the several associating counties, requesting each Committee to enforce it in the respective county.

That the several correspondencies and proceedings in each county, upon this subject, be made public.

It is presumed that the gentlemen of each county will be informed of the real and reputed interest prevailing in each borough.

It is likewise presumed that the sort of correspondence, which is here proposed, will naturally tend to distribute the boroughs, in the several counties, into their several classes, such as numerous and popular boroughs of 1000 voters or more,—less numerous and popular, viz. 200, or 300, or 400,—private boroughs of 30, 40, or 50,—burgage tenures, &c. &c. &c. which may lead to a rational plan of reformation, by a distribution of cases, instead of lumping various and dissimilar cases under one common description, which ought to require different remedies according to each specific case:—for instance, it happens in many cases that the most popular and considerable boroughs in the county, may be as notoriously venal as the most private rotten borough; the remedy should be different, altho' in cases equally venal: the great borough,

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if venal, should be reformed; the lesser borough might perhaps be suppressed. The distinction in this case, supposed of equal venality turns upon the difference that the lesser borough is not only venal, but an unequal representative: To lay a foundation for a rational reformation of Parliament, the different cases should be investigated.

It is presumed that the correspondence, above described, will lay open the real state of venality in the respective boroughs. The venality of Electors, is one principal foundation of public evils; unequal representation is the other half,—but they should be distinguished from each other.

If in a popular venal borough, there should be found a determined spirit not to associate for the purpose of renouncing bribery and confessed infamy :

If Candidates refuse to answer the letters of the Committee, or to give satisfactory and honourable assurance on the subject required,—let such refusal stand in public testimony against them,—let all thoughts and deeds of darkness be brought to light.

On the other hand, the correspondencies of such boroughs, or of such private gentlemen, as shall be ready to take a decided and honourable part in their respective spheres, to oppose the torrent of national venality and corruption, will bring the highest honour to themselves, will afford the

the most laudable example to their country, and will form the most unexceptionable groundwork of a General National Association, for the purpose of public reformation.

THIS Paper was not received by the Chairman of the Committee, to whom it was addressed, till the 15th of August, 1780; the earliest Meeting of that Committee, after the 15th of August, was not held till the 7th of September following, when that body had not leisure to avail themselves of the Plan communicated by their unknown friend. In the struggle with Mr. Lascelles, which commenced about that time, and which ended in the expulsion of that gentleman from his seat, as Representative of the county of York, the proposal was unavoidably laid aside; and after the General Election, it was not sufficiently attended to by the Committee.

Paper XXVI.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee
of Association of the County of York, Septem-
ber 2, 1780,*

PRESENT,

WILLIAM WITHERS, Esq; Chairman.
Dr. Swainston Rev. R. Croft

Resolved, That the following letter be sent,
by the Clerk, to the Rev. Mr. Wyvill:

Rev. Sir,

THE Sub-Committee have just now met, in consequence of certain information that Parliament is dissolved, and desire me to inform you, that they intend to call a Meeting of the General Committee, for next Thursday; and as they suppose that the most early information of such Meeting may be desirable to you, they send this away by an express. The Sub-Committee propose meeting again to-morrow at 11 o'clock, and will meet every day till next Tuesday, and they will be happy to see you as soon as you can make it convenient.

I am, &c.

W. GRAY.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following circular letter be sent, by the Clerk, to each Member of the General Committee.

Sir,

PARLIAMENT being dissolved, the Sub-Committee of Association, now met, have fixed a Meeting of the General Committee for next Thursday, at ten in the forenoon, at which time your attendance is earnestly requested.

I am, &c.

Resolved, That the Sub-Committee do meet again on Monday next, at ten o'clock.

WM. WITHERS, Esq; Chairman.

Paper XXVII.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee of Association of the County of York, Sept. 4, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.	
Mr. St. Quintin	Mr. Withers
Rev. William Dealtry	Rev. William Mason
Rev. R. Croft	

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Resolved,

Resolved, That the following advertisements be inserted in the York papers, viz. The first in the York Courant, and the second in the York Courant and Chronicle, and also in the London evening papers.

1. THE Committee of Association is requested to meet at the York-Tavern on Thursday next, the 7th of September; the unexpected dissolution of Parliament having rendered this measure absolutely necessary.

WILLIAM GRAY, jun. Clerk.

2. *To the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders, of Yorkshire,*

YOU are most earnestly requested not to engage your votes and interest, till a Meeting of the county of York can be obtained, when a gentleman of independent character and fortune will certainly be proposed as a Candidate, for the honour of your support, at the approaching election, who is a friend to that plan of national oeconomy, and constitutional reform, which Sir George Savile has declared his intention to promote.

Resolved,

Resolved, That the following letter be sent,
by the Chairman, to William Bethell, Esq; High
Sheriff of this county.

YORK-TAVERN, Sept. 4, 1780.

Sir,

THE dissolution of Parliament
being now made public, the Sub-Committee of
Association earnestly request that you would be
pleased to call a Meeting of the Freeholders of
this county, on the earliest day; that proper
persons may be put in nomination to represent
them in the ensuing Parliament. The favour of
your answer, by the bearer, is requested.

I have the honour to be, &c.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper XXVIII.

Address of Sir GEO. SAVILE to his Constituents.

To the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders, of
the County of York.

Gentlemen,

I venture once more to make you a tender of my service in Parliament. Give me leave, at the same time, to offer you my cordial thanks for all the indulgencies you have shewn me; and for your kind acceptance of my endeavours to perform the duty I had undertaken. I look upon that partiality and favour as a most honourable testimony, because it proves that you entertain a conviction of the purity of my intentions, sufficient to make you overlook every thing amiss which did not proceed from the will.

In renewing my desire to continue in your service, I think it, however, my duty to confess to you, that it has not been without much serious consideration, and more than common hesitation, that I have determined upon it. I must not omit making you aware, that it is by no means

means probable I should be able even to perform the mere duty of attendance as punctually as I have hitherto done ; especially if the duration of Parliament should prove to be for seven years. By what I have in some degree experienced already, I have no reason to believe so long a continuance of such an attendance would be perfectly consistent with my health.

But there is something more serious I have to say to you on this subject. The satisfaction and honour of attending your business have ever over-balanced the labour : but my attendance during the last Parliament has been something worse than laborious ; it has been discouraging, grievous, and painful. Look back, for a moment, upon the things which have been done, or, (being done) have been approved of, by that body, of which I have been a constituent part. Compare the present with the past situation of public affairs. Whether glory, conquest, and riches ; or, peace, content, liberty, and the enjoyment of your constitutional rights, be your principal objects—In which of them have you been gratified ? I have been, in my collective capacity, a party to all these changes, and to all the measures which have produced them : supported in this mortifying situation, with one only consolation, a very great one indeed to my own mind, that of being able to assure you, that there has been no one measure, of all those that
have

have proved so ruinous and fatal, which I have not, as an individual, resisted, to the utmost of my power. A poor, barren, ineffectual negative; and a miserable claim to your favour, to have failed (as far as my power and slender efforts are in question) almost in every point regarding those rights, and that prosperity, which I was specially chosen to cultivate and maintain.

I return to you, therefore, baffled and dispirited, and I am sorry that truth obliges me to add, with hardly a ray of hope of seeing any change in the miserable course of public calamities.

On this melancholy day of account in rendering up to you my trust, I deliver to you your share of a country maimed and weakened, its treasure lavished and mis-spent, its honours faded, and its conduct the laughing-stock of Europe; our nation in a manner without allies or friends, except such as we have hired to destroy our fellow-subjects, and to ravage a country, in which we once claimed an invaluable share. I return to you some of your principal privileges impeached, and mangled. And, lastly, I leave you, as I conceive at this hour and moment fully, effectually, and absolutely under the discretion and power of a military force, which is to act without waiting for the authority of the civil magistrates; for it is fit you should know, if you are not already informed, that an
order

order issued in London (at a moment when the violence of the riots, and the remissness of the civil magistrate might render necessary an extraordinary and violent temporary exertion of the military) that order, I say, has, as I have good grounds to believe, been extended to the whole kingdom; where neither of those causes existed in any degree sufficient to justify so decisive and extraordinary a measure; and I do not know of that order being recalled.

In this state of public affairs, and with this account to render of my commission, judge whether I can boldly and chearfully, or supported by any rational confidence, boast to you as candidates are wont to do, of what I will do, and what I will undertake for your service.

For this reason, avoiding even the usual style of such addresses, and forbearing as well the forward promises as the superficial humbleness of phrase in use on these occasions, I make it a solemn duty to lay before you, without disguise or palliation, the present state of your concerns as they appear to me, and the gloomy prospect which lies before us.

Some have been accused of exaggerating the public misfortunes, nay of having endeavoured to help forward the mischief, that they might afterwards raise discontents. I am willing to hope, that neither my temper, nor my situation in life, will be thought naturally to urge me to promote

promote misery, discord, or confusion; or to exult in the subversion of order, or in the ruin of property. I have no reason to contemplate with pleasure the poverty of our country, the increase of our debts, and of our taxes: or the decay of our commerce—Trust not, however, to my report. Reflect, compare, and judge for yourselves.

But under all these disheartening circumstances, I could yet entertain a chearful hope, and undertake again the commission with alacrity, as well as zeal, if I could see any effectual steps taken to remove the original cause of the mischief. “Then would there be a hope.”

Till the purity of the Constituent body, and thereby that of the Representative be restored, there is NONE.

While the electors sell their voices to the Member, and the Member distresses his fortune to buy them, Parliament will be the purchase of the Minister. Parliament-men will find ways of partaking other advantages than merely their share in common with you, of those good measures which they shall promote, and of those good laws which they shall enact for your government and their own: and the modern improved arts of corruption, by contracts, subscriptions, and jobs, is attended with this perverse and vexatious consequence; that their benefit is not only unconnected with your's,
but

but it grows upon your distress. They feed on the expence; they fatten on every extravagance that art and ill-conduct can engraft on the natural disadvantages of a remote, rash, ill-fated, impolitic, and unsuccessful war: the Minister's direct interest (nay his safety) mean while, requiring him to push the desperate game, and even in self-defence, to increase that very expence which is his crime; to entrench himself still deeper in corruption, and by headlong and unmeasured extravagance, to have the means of justifying to the faithful Commons, his former mismanagement and misdeeds.—See where this ends, but forget not where it begins.

I am led here very naturally to speak upon the subject of certain regulations, which have been the object of your late assemblies and deliberations. Indeed, I have brought myself to this matter almost unavoidably, but not unwillingly. I gladly embrace this most public opportunity of delivering my sentiments, not only to all my constituents, but to those, likewise, not my constituents, whom yet in the large sense I represent, and am faithfully to serve; not only to twenty thousand, my electors, but to hundreds of thousands, in the county I represent, (to go no farther) who are to suffer under the bad conduct of Parliament; and of declaring my intentions, regarding the two chief articles contained in the resolutions agreed to at your late meetings;

meetings; I mean, rendering Parliament triennial, and adding to the number of county Representatives.

I do intend to give my voice, if I have the honour of continuing in your service, for the change of septennial Parliaments. And this, not because I am so sanguine as some are, in a full persuasion, that it will be a cure for all our evils; no, nor even that I promise myself it will be attended with any such sure hope of considerable advantage, (at least, if unaccompanied by some other steps tending to purify the sources of election and representation) but chiefly, because, on the best information I have obtained, I have reason to believe it is the mind and desire of a very large number of my constituents: this seeming to me to be the one point (at least with distinguished preference) on which the sender, not he who is sent, has the perfect right to judge; and that, even if after all, I should have mistaken their general sense, it will be at least the safer error; since there is a manifest difference between the obtruding one's self for seven years on him who wishes to have his choice again at the end of three; and returning for his approbation at three; when he might perhaps have been well content to trust one for seven.

I have a momentary pleasure in adding (especially when supported by your opinions) that I
am

am willing to flatter myself, rather good than evil may arise from the change.

But I look upon restoring election and representation in some degree (for I expect no miracles) to their original purity, to be that, without which all other efforts will be vain and ridiculous. The tenant-right, or good-will of a lease of three years, is as saleable as that of a lease of seven. It will find its price at both the London and country markets. It will be bought, it will be sold. The Member will be as manageable, if the Constituent be as venal. And they will not be afraid to meet at market as often as you please.

The adding to the county representation, if by no means a perfect cure, seems yet to me to be the plainest and best proposition for this purpose, that has yet come under my observation. I trust, likewise, it may be practicable. I therefore embrace it, not only from a deference to your opinion, but with an approbation of my own. Yet, not flattering you, that it appears to me one of those matters easy of execution, or to be done with a thought; on the contrary, it is more complicated (as it seems to me more effectual) than the first mentioned alteration. But this is no time to talk of small rubs, or difficulties. If something be not done, you may, indeed, retain the outward form of your constitution, but not the power thereof.

For

For it is too serious a truth to be concealed, and, indeed, it is too late seriously to attempt to conceal it, that if the electors, forgetting the solemn duty they owe to the millions of their fellow-subjects, whose rights they are in the first instance intrusted with: if, forgetting the sacred trust reposed in them, of choosing those who are to govern those millions; if, forgetting that they are therefore a sort of representatives of all the people (who would be too numerous to vote themselves) I say, if forgetting these things, and shamefully prostituting themselves, they are become so profligate as to sell themselves and their country; let them not wonder (nay, scarcely can they complain without shame) if those whom they choose, imitating their conduct, retail daily those rights which they have bought, whether it be at the septennial, triennial, or annual fairs, and markets. We can converse thus without a blush.

Neither time permits, nor does propriety allow me to enter into arguments in support of a sentiment of which (much I think to your honour) you have declared your approbation.—But although it suits neither the time, nor the circumstance, to argue and debate, I trust you will not think I am out of the line of propriety, of duty, or of the respect I owe you, in thus making a public declaration of my opinions and intentions in matters concerning which,
after

after the tender I have made of my service, you have an unquestionable right, as you must have a natural wish, to be informed.

When I began this paper, I had reason to believe the time pressed; I was soon confirmed in what I had heard. It was become material to address you quickly, if at all: but although what I have written has been the work of a few hours, do not think that the matter has not again and again been the subject of deliberate thought. I should not have dared to have presented you with crude and undigested ideas, or the fancy of a moment: but, on the other hand, so inattentive have I been to the advantages this address might receive, in its form, from the assistance of abler persons than myself, that I venture to submit it thus publicly to you, without the opportunity of communicating it to those whose principles, judgment, and line of conduct, in the public walk, I have been habituated to look up to with high respect and esteem.

My business is not to write ably to you, but to write with sincerity. The relation that stands now between us, gives you a right, if I may so speak, to my unmingled sentiments; and I willingly submit every defect to your censure, rather than be supposed to use management and art, or to consult what is conformable to personal or party considerations, instead of that which unbridled truth (according to my conception of it)

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requires

requires of me. What farther steps may be in contemplation towards obtaining the laudable object of our wishes, I do not know: but it is not probable that what has lately arisen will slacken the zeal of those who have already stepped forward in the business. With that idea upon my mind, it is impossible for me to conclude without expressing an earnest wish, that whatever is thought of may be pursued with that true spirit of firmness and moderation, which belongs to the cause of justice; and above all, that by every means that can be devised, a good understanding and union may be insured amongst respectable men, of all ranks and descriptions, who agree in the main principles of liberty; although there may be shades of difference in smaller points, or in matters not calling for immediate discussion. Indeed, you will find it true wisdom, and a very honourable policy, to strengthen the cause of your country with every honest aid that can be obtained.—No public cause was ever carried by divided efforts.

Till I have the honour of meeting you in the exercise of the great and respectable function of choosing your representatives, I beg leave to subscribe myself, Gentlemen, with perfect respect, and a remembrance of all your kindness,

Your most obliged,

and faithful humble servant,

G. SAVILE.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, Sept. 5, 1780.

Paper XXIX.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association of the County of York, September 7, 1780.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Mr. Morritt	Mr. Booth
Mr. J. S. Smith	Mr. H. Duncombe
Sir Wm. St. Quintin	Sir John Coghill
Mr. Foljambe	Mr. Stovin
Rev. William Mason	Mr. Rawson
Mr. Strickland	Mr. Sayer
Sir William Milner	General Hale
Lieutenant Colonel Thornton	Mr. W. Wilton
Mr. Chaloner	Mr. Maude
Mr. Courtney	Rev. Henry Zouch
Rev. John Robinson	Mr. Saltmarsh
Mr. Lloyd	Mr. Ellsley
Mr. P. Milnes	Mr. Withers
Mr. John Milnes	Mr. Edmunds
Mr. James Milnes	The Earl of Effingham
Mr. R. S. Milnes	Mr. Shore
Mr. Cradock	Rev. John Dixon
Mr. H. Thompson	Mr. Hill
Mr. Garforth	Mr. Croft
Mr. St. Quintin	Mr. Croft, jun.
Mr. Dalton	Mr. Wentworth
Mr. Childers	Mr. Hildyard
Rev. John Preston	Mr. Marriott
Mr. Walker	Dr. Swainston
Mr. Bell	Mr. Shepherd—elected this day
Mr. Tooker	

Resolved, That Francis Shepherd, Esq; of Knaresborough, and Samuel Walker, jun. Esq; of Rotherham, be added to this Committee.

Resolved, (the Earl of Effingham having withdrawn) That the thanks of this Committee be given to the gentlemen of the Sub-Committee, who, upon receiving an account of the sudden dissolution of Parliament, requested the High-Sheriff to call a General Meeting of this county.

A copy of the letter to the High-Sheriff from the Sub-Committee of Association, and also a copy of the High-Sheriff's answer thereto, having been this day read at this Meeting, as follows, viz.

Sir,

I RECEIVED the favour of your's, but do not approve of calling a county Meeting.
I am, &c. &c.

WM. BETHELL.

WATTON, Sept. 4, 1780.

To the Rev. C. WYVILLE.

The Committee of Association conceiving that, in the present critical situation of public affairs, it is absolutely necessary that the sense of the Freeholders of this county should be taken previous to the approaching General Election,—do resolve, That an advertisement be published in the two York papers, signifying that in pursuance of the authority entrusted to them by a Resolution of the county Meeting, held on the 28th day of March last, this Committee doth request the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders,
of

of the county of York, to meet at the Assembly-Room in York, on Thursday the 14th day of September instant, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, to consider of proper persons to be put in nomination to represent them in the ensuing Parliament.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Sir George Savile, for his constitutional and manly address to the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders, of this county, dated Newcastle, the 5th of September inst. and for his faithful service as one of its Representatives.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned to Wednesday next the 13th inst. at ten o'clock in the forenoon.†

C. WYVILL.

† The Committee, in pursuance of this adjournment, met on the 13th of September, read Mr. Burke's letter in answer to that of the Chairman, conveying the Resolution of the Meeting held on the 3d of August; and resolved, that the following Gentlemen be added to the Committee:

Declined acting —	John Lumb, Esq;	} All of Wake-	
Declined acting —	Richard Lumb, Esq;		field.
	Robert Lumb, Esq;		
	Thomas Lumb, Esq;		
	R. Wylde Moul, Esq;	of Wickersley.	
	Tho. Wolrich, Esq;	} of Leeds.	
	Obadiah Dawson, Esq;		

The Committee also resolved on the 14th of September, that Lord de Ferrars, and Thomas Arthington, Esq; of Arthington, be added to the Committee.

Paper XXX.

**Letter from EDMUND BURKE, Esq; to the Rev.
C. WYVILL.**

Sir,

I AM honoured with your letter of the fourth of this month, conveying to me the unanimous desire of the gentlemen of the Yorkshire Committee, that I should move, in the next Session, the revival of the establishment bill, which had been rejected in the last,

It is a bill of much detail; I am therefore apprehensive, that unless the support it receives be very strong and very systematical, it will not be possible to carry it against the opposition of that powerful influence, which it is one of the principal objects of the bill to moderate.

You will have the goodness to assure the gentlemen of the Committee, that I entertain the most grateful sense of the favour I receive in the communication of their wishes through your hands; and I beg you to be assured, that if a probability of success should appear, I shall be extremely happy in yielding the readiest obedience to their commands, and in consequence of them, will bring again before Parliament a
matter

matter which, from weariness and despair, I had entirely abandoned,

Whenever the object is consistent with my principles, I must always consider it as one of the most valuable marks of distinction, I can receive, to be chosen among the instruments of what the most respectable parts of the community consider as conducive to the public good.

I have the honour to be,

With great respect and esteem,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

And humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

CHARLES-STREET, S. J. S.

August 14, 1780.

To the Rev. C. WYVILL.

Of the Letter, to which Mr. Burke returned this answer, no copy was preserved.

T4 Paper XXXI.

Paper XXXI.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of
Association of the County of York, held on the
28th day of September, 1780.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Mr. B. Foord	Mr. Chaloner
Mr. Lloyd	Mr. F. Smith
Rev. J. Robinson	Mr. P. Milnes
Mr. Athorpe	Sir Geo. Strickland
Rev. W. Mason	Mr. Hildyard
Mr. Morritt	Mr. Maude
Rev. John Michell	Mr. Sykes
Mr. Walker	Mr. Croft, jun.
Rev. John Dixon	Rev. William Dealtry
Mr. Saltmarsh	Mr. H. Duncombe
Rev. Fred. Dodsworth	Dr. Swainston
Mr. Richard Milnes, Flockton	Mr. Baynes, Jun.
Mr. Walker, Jun.	Mr. John Milnes
Mr. Cradock	Mr. Strickland
Rev. L. Yarker	Mr. Baynes
Mr. Arthington	Mr. L. S. Lascelles
Mr. Micklethwaite	

Resolved, That this Committee will proceed to a nomination of Deputies, on the 3d day of January next, to attend in London, to communicate with the Delegates of other petitioning or associated bodies, on the means of carrying into effect the objects of their Petitions or Associations.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned to the 3d of January next, at ten in the forenoon.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper XXXII.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Surrey Committee, on the 11th of November, 1780.

PRESENT,

Sir FRANCIS VINCENT, Chairman.

Hon. Augustus Keppel	T. Wood
Sir Robert Clayton	H. Vincent
Sir Joseph Mawbey	P. C. Webb
Sir Richard Hotham	J. S. Budge
B. Bond Hopkins	O. Manning
William Gill	J. Nicholls
James Trecothick	P. C. Crespiigny
Carew Sanders	P. Hollingworth
W. Rowles	R. Hollingworth
G. P. Towey	H. S. Gill
W. Morland	J. D. Garthwaite
J. Wilkinson	J. Leech
T. Day	R. Hudson
G. Allen	R. Tayler
T. Scott	R. C. Smith

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, June 7, 1780.

ORDERS.

IN obedience to an order of the King's Council,—“The military to act without waiting for directions from the civil magistrates, and to use force for dispersing the illegal and tumultuous assemblies of the people.

WILLIAM AMHERST,
Adjutant-General.”

Resolved,

Resolved unanimously, That the interference of the military, for the suppression of the riots, not under the direction of the civil magistrate, but at the discretion of their commanding officer, is a dangerous deviation from the usual and constitutional practice during the reigns of the two first Princes of the House of Hanover, which the most urgent and evident necessity alone can render excusable.

Resolved, That however the order, for the interference of the military at their discretion, for the suppression of the late riots in the metropolis, may have been unavoidable from the pressing circumstances of the case, viz. From the greatness of the danger, the intimidation of the magistracy from the due execution of their office, in maintaining or restoring the public peace; yet, without the face of disorder existing, the extension of similar orders to the army throughout all England, and which had not been taken off during the General Election, is an usurpation of power; which, while it insults the constitution, excites the most alarming fears in the breasts of all its friends.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Representatives of this county, to inquire in Parliament, by whose advice the said order was issued; for what time, and by whose advice, it was continued; and to take such steps as shall to them seem best suited to prevent such unconstitutional

stitutional and dangerous orders from being issued in future.

Resolved, That as all public burthens must either mediately or immediately affect the property of the people, and as it hath ever been their undoubted privilege to grant, or to withhold supplies, so it is their legal and constitutional right to assemble peaceably, for the purpose of instructing their Representatives, considering the exigencies of the times and petitioning for a redress of grievances.

Resolved, That this right, which has been always exercised by every part of the English people, is now more necessary than ever, when the continually increasing expences of a ruinous and disastrous war threaten the very annihilation of private property; and when the Representatives of the people, instead of being chosen to express the people's sense on every great political question, claim a seven years independence of their electors.

Resolved, That therefore this Committee, with a genuine and merited contempt of those malignant calumnies which tend to confound the legal and peaceable assemblies of the English people, with the outrages of a frantic populace, will pursue the ends of their original institution, and that redress of grievances which was refused them by a corrupt majority in the last Parliament.

Resolved, That the voice of the Commons of England is no less necessary for every legislative purpose,

purpose, than that of either the Sovereign or the Lords; and that therefore the people claim it as their just and inherent privilege, to correct the abuses of representation, whenever such abuses shall have so increased as to rob them of their constitutional share in their own government.

Resolved, That it ill becomes men, who are engaged in the assertion of their own rights, to invade the liberties of others,—therefore this Committee doth protest, in the most explicit manner, against the prosecution of the American war, which has been productive of the greatest evils, and threatens destruction to this kingdom by its continuance—

That Sir F. Vincent, Bart. J. Smith Budgen, J. Trecothick, John Nicholls, and Thomas Day, Esqrs. be appointed Deputies from this Committee, to meet and to confer with Deputies from other counties, either in the city of London or in the city of Westminster, and to report to this Committee.

That this Committee do adjourn, sine die, subject to the call of the Chairman, upon application of any three Members of the Committee.

F. VINCENT, Chairman.

NUMBER VI.

Paper I.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of
Association of the County of York, on the 3d
day of January, 1781.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

The Earl of Effingham	Mr. Dring
Sir George Strickland	Mr. Croft
Sir James Norcliffe	Mr. Croft, junr.
Mr. H. Duncombe	Mr. Edmunds
Rev. W. Mason	Mr. St. Quintin
Mr. Hildyard	Rev. John Preston
Mr. Chakoner	Mr. Dixon
Rev. Henry Zouch	Mr. Hayes
General Hale	Mr. Elsey
Mr. Morritt	Sir John Legard
Mr. Strickland	Mr. P. Milnes
The Dean of York	Mr. R. S. Milnes
Mr. Tooker	Rev. Fred. Dodsworth
Mr. St. A. Ward	Rev. James Wilkinson
Rev. John Robinson	Mr. Place
Mr. H. Osbaldeston	Mr. Stansfield
Lieut. Col. Thornton	Mr. Wolrich
Mr. Grimston	Dr. Swainston
Mr. Marriott	Rev. William Comber
Mr. Dalton	Mr. Walker
Mr. Cradock	Mr. Walker, junr.
Mr. T. Weddell	Mr. John Milnes

Mr.

Mr. Maude	Mr. Sykes
Mr. Courtney	Rev. James Lawson
Mr. Shore	Mr. Yorke } elected this day
Rev. William Cayley	Mr. Battle }
Mr. R. Wilson	Sir William Milner
Rev. John Bourne	Mr. H. Thompson
Mr. Wentworth	Mr. Garforth
Mr. Withers	Mr. Hill

Resolved, That the following Members be added to this Committee :

John Yorke, Esq; of Richmond
 Thomas Fenwick, Esq; of Burrow, Westmoreland
 The Rev. Charles Dalton of Hawkefwell
 ——— Willis, Esq; }
 The Rev. ——— Gawthorpe, } of Sedburgh
 William Battle, Esq; of Welton

Resolved, That three Deputies be appointed to attend in London, to communicate with the Delegates of other petitioning or associated Bodies, on the means of carrying into effect the objects of their Petitions or Affociations.

Resolved, That the Rev. Chrittopher Wyvill, Samuel Shore, Esq; and Sir James Norcliffe, Bart. be nominated and appointed Deputies for the several purposes before-mentioned.

Resolved, That a copy of the following Instrument of nomination, with instructions to the above-named Deputies, be transmitted by the Clerk to each Deputy.*

Resolved, That the following Address be printed and published as the act of this Committee; and that copies thereof and of the instructions to the

* For this instrument, see paper II, page 300.

the Deputies, be transmitted to the Chairmen of the several petitioning and associated Bodies in this kingdom.*

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Rev. C. Wyvill for drawing up the foregoing Address.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to David Hartley, Esq; for his unwearied and disinterested services in the public cause; and also their particular acknowledgments for his address to this Committee, dated this day.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

* For this Address, see paper III. page 305.

Paper II.

Paper II.

Instrument appointing Deputies, with instructions from the Committee of Association for the County of York, to meet and deliberate with Deputies from other Counties, Cities, and Boroughs, &c. and, in concurrence with them, to take the most effectual measures, consistent with Law and the Constitution, to promote the objects of that Association. Dated at York, January 3, 1781.

THE Committee of Association having been impowered by a General Meeting of the county of York, held on the 28th of March, 1780, to take such legal and constitutional measures as to them shall appear most expedient for promoting the objects of the Association adopted by that Assembly, doth nominate and appoint you the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, Samuel Shore, Esq; and Sir James Norcliffe, Bart. to be their Deputies, with full power, on the 20th day of February next, or as soon after as conveniently may be, to meet in London or Westminster, and to confer with such persons as may attend the proposed Meeting of Deputies, who shall have received authority for that purpose from
any

any County, City, or Borough, within this kingdom, or from any Committee appointed by the same.

And this Committee doth hereby impower and direct you the said Christopher Wyvill, Samuel Shore, and Sir James Norcliffe, to act on the part and behalf of this Committee, in such matters, and in such manner as in this Instrument are specified or allowed, and in no other matter or manner.

You shall concur with the Deputies from other counties, cities, and boroughs, &c. or the majority of them, in any proper application to Parliament, during the continuance of your deputed authority, for correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, and for reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown, which ought to be diminished, provided the redress of grievances, proposed as the object of such application, shall be equivalent to the oeconomical reform requested by the petition of this county to the last Parliament. And when this important measure for correcting public profusion, and reducing the undue influence of the Crown, shall have been taken into consideration, and in some competent degree advanced, you shall also move the Deputies aforesaid to consider the extreme inequality in the Parliamentary representation of this kingdom, and to endeavour, in the present Session, by bill, by petition, or by any other advisable

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mode

mode of applying to Parliament, to obtain a more adequate representation of the people, by the introduction of at least one hundred additional county Members; without which necessary counterpoize to the numerous Representatives of venal, hereditary, or otherwise unduly influenced boroughs, no lasting or effectual check can be given to the baneful progress of corruption, now manifestly tending to the ruin of our happy Constitution.

And this Committee considering, according to the principles of the Association, that material advantage would more clearly result to the Constitution, if the duration of Parliament were shortened, when a more frugal management of the public purse, a reduction of the undue influence of the Crown, and a more equal representation of the people have taken place; and not expecting that abuses, profitable to individuals, however injurious to the community, can be corrected without many difficulties and much laborious exertion, will not positively direct you the said Deputies to move the concurrence of the other Deputies, in a farther application to shorten the duration of Parliament to a term not exceeding three years; but fully confiding in your judgment and fidelity to the public cause, commits to your discretion to determine according to the actual circumstances which may arise in the course of your conference, whether such motion may be prudent and advisable,

visable, or premature and inconvenient at present, and fit to be postponed to a future Session of Parliament; and to act therein accordingly.

And this Committee, anxious to guard against every attempt to misrepresent their views of public reformation, by peaceful and legal means, and wishing to obviate imputations injurious to the intended general deputation, by which the just and necessary purpose of that Assembly may be defamed and finally defeated, doth hereby most strictly require you the said Deputies, to confine your propositions in the General Meeting of Deputies, to the reform specified in this Instrument, or to regulations by plain and necessary connection immediately dependent upon them.

And this Committee doth most expressly require you the said Deputies to promote the several objects of public reformation, signified in this Instrument, to the best of your judgment, and to the utmost of your power, by orderly means alone, by dutiful application to Parliament, or by such other prudential measures as may be perfectly consistent with Law and the Constitution.

And if any farther regulations for restoring the Constitution shall be suggested by the Deputies of any other county or city, &c. this Committee not being empowered itself, and therefore unable to empower their Deputies to accede to any resolution concerning such new

proposal, doth hereby authorise and require two or more of you the said Deputies, in such case, to call an extraordinary Meeting of this Committee, giving a sufficient notice thereof in the public papers; and to report such new proposition to the Committee, in order that the propriety of calling a County Meeting to consult the general body of Freeholders on the subject may be duly considered.

Lastly, This Committee doth resolve, That the authority hereby given to you the said Deputies shall cease and determine on the first of May, 1781; and doth require, that at the next Meeting of the Committee, after the expiration of this authority, a report of the proceedings of the General Meeting of Deputies be laid by you before the Committee.

Paper III.

Paper III.

*The Address of the Committee of Association for
the County of York, to the Electors of the
Counties, Cities, and Boroughs, within the
Kingdom of Great-Britain.*

AFTER much dispassionate reflection on the multiplied grievances of our country, on the necessity of some substantial redress, and the most prudent mode of attempting to obtain it, the Committee of Yorkshire have appointed the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, Samuel Shore, Esq; and Sir James Norcliffe, Bart. their Deputies, with full power to meet and deliberate with Deputies from other counties, cities, and boroughs, and in concurrence with them to take the most effectual measures, consistent with Law and the Constitution, to promote that political reform which the county of York has associated to support.

The Committee are perfectly satisfied that such deputation is strictly legal, and consonant with every principle of the Constitution. The right to petition Parliament for a redress of grievances, is a fundamental right of the British people; and the exercise of that right, in any

mode which is prohibited by no positive statute, cannot be unlawful. Let it be acknowledged then, that this deputation is an uncommon appointment; uncommon distress has called it forth; and when new dangers arise to public liberty, new modes of defence, adapted to resist the attack, are not only justifiable, but absolutely necessary for its preservation. The truth of this observation will hardly be contested by those, who, understanding the nature and value of civil liberty, have the spirit to support it, by a strenuous exertion of their legal powers. But it may be expected that much misrepresentation and artful suggestion will be employed by the obstructors of reformation, to calumniate the Committee, and by exciting groundless apprehensions of innovation, and hazardous opposition to Government, to alienate the great body of independent Electors from the public cause. It is not only thought expedient, therefore, to submit to general inspection the instructions of the Committee to their Deputies; but also to state, in a full and explicit manner, their views of public reformation, and the motives of their political conduct for promoting that important work. Whether their interposition for that purpose be proper or reasonable; whether the means of redress they have proposed be practicable and prudent; whether the end itself be just and necessary; these are questions in which they feel themselves too deeply concerned, to pronounce

pronounce their opinion. To the judgment of their countrymen they appeal: To the decision of men of candour, moderation, and upright intentions to the public they cheerfully submit their conduct; with such men they sincerely wish to co-operate; and from their approbation and concurrence they derive their only hope, that the progress of corruption may yet be checked by pacific means, and the Parliament of this country may be restored in some degree to the purity of its original institution.

During the reigns of the four Princes of the House of Stuart, frequent attempts were made, by those weak but ambitious Monarchs, to overturn the Constitution, to abolish Parliaments, and to assume by force an unlimited and despotic authority. Succeeding Princes, warned by the repeated miscarriages and final ruin of that family, at the Revolution, seem to have adopted a milder but not less dangerous mode of attack. From that period, instead of violent usurpation, and declared hostility to Parliaments, it has been the prevailing policy of Government to employ the arts of seduction, and by creating a corrupt dependence in those Assemblies, virtually to emancipate the Crown from all controul. For almost a century, corruption, with few exceptions, and short, very short interruptions, has been the avowed principle of our Government. The tendency of this fatal system has long been seen and deplored by the wise and

virtuous part of the community. But while the restoration of the Stuart line was an event within any degree of probability, the return of undisguised despotism was the immediate danger, against which the growing influence of the Crown was unwarily cherished as the only adequate defence. In later times, in the full flow of national pride and prosperity, to stem the torrent of corruption, had been a vain and unprofitable attempt.

But now, by the unspeakable infatuation of our councils, the scene of national glory is changed; with much of our foreign trade our naval superiority is lost; our American provinces are dismembered from the Empire; and our ancient foes, aided by our once friendly ally, and encouraged by almost every other European power, are proudly insulting over this wretched country. At home, agriculture and manufactures decline, as the load of taxes and our public debts increase; the national substance is wasting fast away by the profusion of expence in this rash and unfortunate war; and the influence of the Crown fed by that very prodigality, and increased in full proportion to it, is now swollen to a most alarming magnitude. The system of corruption has reached to its maturity; and the crisis of our country is at length arrived. The amputation of that poisonous tumour, the excrescence of our vitiated Constitution, must, therefore,

therefore, be resolved on, or political dissolution must soon be the unavoidable consequence.

With an alternative like this before them, the choice of freemen is soon determined. The Committee, therefore, took an early and an active part in support of that Petition to the House of Commons, which was agreed to at a General Meeting of the county of York, on the 30th of December, 1779, and which was soon after presented to that House. With great satisfaction they observed the singular unanimity of so many counties and corporate towns, who honoured this county with their concurrence in that measure, supporting their proposition for an oeconomical reform, and adopting, not unfrequently, the language of their petition. The satisfaction of the Committee arose not from a fond parental partiality for their own production, but from the just hope that concurrence seemed to afford, that so temperate a reform, requested by the general voice of the people, would not be solicited in vain from the Representative Assembly. But in these expectations, however apparently reasonable, they have been miserably disappointed. The inadequate relief in the mode of collecting the public revenues, with some official regulations, which possibly may be obtained hereafter, by the dilatory operation of a commission of accounts, is not that reform which the people asked, and had a right to expect. The memorable but ineffectual vote,
that

that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminished, only served to cover that venal Assembly with eternal shame. For not one specific proposition for diminishing the enormous influence of the Crown has been granted; not one exorbitant emolument of office has been reduced; not one sinecure place has been abolished; nor a single pension unmerited by public service struck off the list. Even the motion of the excellent Representative of Yorkshire, for the production of that list, was negatived by a corrupt majority.

The Committee may be shocked, but they are not discouraged, by those evident proofs of the prostitution of that Assembly. On the contrary, they are more fully convinced that the abuses of Parliament itself are become the principal object of public reformation. Among these the inequality in the representation of the people may justly be pointed out as the fundamental abuse.

The balance of our Constitution had been wisely placed by our forefathers in the hands of the counties and principal cities and towns; but by the caprice and partiality of our Kings, from Henry VI. down to Charles II. it was gradually withdrawn from them, and by the addition of two hundred Parliamentary Burgesses, was wholly vested in the inferior boroughs. From that latter period, the mischiefs of this irregular exercise of Royal authority have been farther increased by the silent operation of time. Many unrepresented

fented towns have risen into population, wealth,
 and consequence, in the kingdom; many bo-
 roughs have sunk into indigence, or have even
 totally disappeared, without a trace of their ex-
 istence left behind them, except the privilege of
 nominal representation. In these decayed bo-
 roughs, the Crown and a few great families no-
 toriously nominate Representatives, who form a
 clear majority of the House of Commons. In that
 majority a liberal Minister will ever find a ready
 support, however ruinous the measures of his Ad-
 ministration may be to the liberty and the general
 interest of his country. The Members who re-
 present the great masses of landed and commer-
 cial property, shall plead in vain for their con-
 stituents. In the scale of Parliamentary compu-
 tation, an inconsiderable village will balance a
 county; and a short list of hamlets, where hardly
 a vestige of population is to be found, will decide
 against the general sense and wishes of the pub-
 lic. A Parliament elected in any reasonable
 proportion, would duly represent the sense, and
 act for the interest of the whole community;
 but from a Senate thus unequally arranged, no
 penal laws, no external regulations can exclude
 corruption; because in situations of no controul,
 partial advantage will still outweigh the public
 good. In Royal innovation this gross abuse in
 the representation of the people chiefly origi-
 nates. From Parliamentary authority a proper
 counterpoize, to these dependent boroughs, must
 be

be restored to the counties and principal cities, &c. before that Assembly can become once more a firm and incorruptible guardian of the public weal.

The septennial duration of Parliaments is another manifest abuse which calls aloud for reformation. The statute enacting that regulation was not only a contradiction to the genius of our Constitution, it was a direct infringement of the triennial law, under whose authority that House of Commons then sat, and had been elected. It was an irregular assumption of power, which the alleged necessity of the times could hardly excuse; it was professed to be a temporary expedient, to guard against the cabals of the banished family; and it was reluctantly submitted to on that single account. But since the pretensions of that family to the Throne have been universally exploded, the repeal of the septennial act is a matter of justice, which state policy no longer forbids, and which the people have the clearest right to demand. Short Parliaments are their ancient and indubitable right; they are also necessary for re-establishing that dependence of the Representative Assembly on the Constituent Body, which it is the peculiar aim and advantage of our happy Constitution to maintain. A more equal representation would restore the balance of our Government to the bulk of the Electors; a shorter duration of Parliaments, by returning Members more frequently, to be approved or rejected by their

their Constituents, as their Parliamentary conduct might deserve, would ever secure the fidelity and vigilance of the Representative Assembly. By a temperate reform of Parliament on these principles, the system of corruption might be effectually excluded, and the enjoyment of our liberties might be transmitted to the latest posterity.

Impressed with these sentiments, the Committee of Yorkshire are not disposed to relax in their pacific efforts to restore the Constitution, because the last House of Commons thought fit to reject the most material parts of the oeconomic petition. The necessity for concerting proper measures to support that petition, and also to obtain a reform in the principal Parliamentary abuses, only appears more evidently demonstrable. For if the great Constituent Body requested that House in vain to correct gross and undeniable abuses; if the alarm at the rapid increase of the influence of the Crown, was at once admitted to be just and well founded, and yet every measure for the diminution of it was rejected with contempt, that House justly forfeited the public confidence. In that House it is plain our domestic complaints have their foundation, and without a reformation of fundamental abuses there, the interposition of the people will be worse than nugatory. Declarations of the public sense, in a regular way, are the ultimate check of the Constitution on a corrupt Parliament, or a tyrannical

rannical administration. But it had been better and wiser far if the people, patiently crouching under the pressure of their burdens, had never solicited redress, than if, after the unjust rejection of their request, they should tamely surrender their rights, and sink at once into abject acquiescence. The people ought not to interpose on trivial or light occasions, but when great and enormous abuses call forth their exertions, they ought not to interpose in vain.

It is necessary then, that the collective sense of the public should be supported by the most efficacious measures which can be devised, consistent with a strict obedience to the regulations of the law. For the system of corruption is an establishment of wide extent; and the retainers of that establishment form a numerous and well-compacted band, determined to maintain every profitable abuse with united strength. In opposition to that mercenary phalanx, the efforts of a few solitary individuals, or even a few unconnected cities and counties, would be too unequal to succeed. From the joint endeavours of the public a political deliverance can only be expected. For this purpose general assemblies of the people, frequently repeated, seem to be too operose a mode; to give due efficacy to the popular interposition, a more compendious method of proceeding seems to be advisable; by which the friends of reformation may be enabled to act with facility and vigour, and yet with

with the full weight and authority of the whole collective body. Whether Associations in the several districts of the kingdom, acting by their respective Committees, and by general Deputation from the Associated Bodies, be the most advantageous mode of collecting and supporting the sense of the public, the Committee of Yorkshire are conscious, it is not their part to decide, but it is a feasible mode; it is a mode conformable to law; and by this mode they trust, the united efforts of independent men throughout the kingdom will be crowned with final and complete success.

The measures which the Committee wish to recommend, as the objects of this general Deputation, are,——

1. The presentment of a Petition to the new Parliament, equivalent in its prayer to the Petition of the county of York.
2. The application to Parliament in such modes, and at such times as may be approved by the majority of Deputies, for obtaining at least one hundred additional county Members, and for shortening the duration of Parliaments to a term not exceeding three years.

If the Committee had confined their Deputies to support the oeconomical Petition, without attempting to obtain any correction of Parliamentary abuses, it is plain their scheme of re-
formation

formation would have been a defective scheme, and in the present circumstances would not have deserved the national support. On the other hand, if they had extended their plan of reformation to the utmost stretch which theory can warrant, they might have proposed an efficacious reform indeed, but it would not have been attainable. To the zealous advocates for annual Parliaments, and the perfect equality of representation, they are most ready to concede, that those propositions may be supported by the ancient practice of the Constitution, and the genuine theory of civil liberty. But when this country is in manifest danger of sinking under that despotic authority, which now tramples on almost every other European state, it behoves the friends of the Constitution not to hazard the total loss of Liberty, by aiming at theoretical, but unattainable perfection. In given circumstances, that is the most eligible plan of improvements, which is the best that can be attained. With the metropolis and many counties, these considerations seem to have had their full weight, and by their generous assistance, with the concurrence of those respectable counties, &c. which have already supported the economical Petition, there is every reason to expect that constitutional improvements may be obtained, which approach as nearly to a perfect system of reform, as the temper and actual circumstances of the nation would allow.

Some

Some excellent persons, to whom the proposed plan of reformation appears unexceptionably proper, have yet objected to the proposition at this time. Their concurrence would have been, and still would be received with high respect and gratitude. But in the present situation of distress, the Committee are clearly convinced, that procrastination and indecision would not be consistent with true political prudence. For when can the correction of abuses be proposed with such propriety, or so much probability of success, as when their mischievous consequences are most severely felt? What can induce a corrupt Parliament to abolish corruption? Not the weight of reason; not the force of shame, but the authority of the public alone. But the same general concurrence of the people, which can reform the corrupt expenditure of public money, with equal ease can correct those Parliamentary defects, whence that corruption originates. There lies the root of our domestic evils; and it is the duty of the Committee to point it out, and to admonish their fellow citizens, that nothing short of a Parliamentary reformation deserves their interposition.—Since the defection of Pulteney from the public cause, the professions of political men have been held in extreme distrust; disinterested men have looked with unconcern on the struggles of contending parties, and, it must be owned, contending parties have too generally deserved it. The individuals who

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form

form the splendid exception are few, and they have not been able much to diminish the popular distrust. Hence the long and unavailing struggle of public men, unsupported by national confidence; hence the reluctance of unambitious men, to embark on any other bottom than that stipulated reform of Parliamentary abuses. The distress of their country has, at last, induced such men to make the virtuous attempt. Uninfluenced by personal regard, or partial considerations; animated with an honest zeal for the welfare of the community, they have quitted their private, but independent stations, to prosecute a full redress of the national grievances; but if a disposition should appear to confine their generous undertaking to the regulation of a few official abuses, of secondary importance in the scale of public affairs, it is impossible to preserve the support of such men on those conditions, nor on those conditions would this Committee wish to preserve it. The general good, therefore, seems to require, that the correction of those abuses in Parliament, which are the foundation of our domestic calamities, be now proposed to the public, as the proper and principal object of their united endeavours.

Having thus freely stated to their countrymen their views of reformation, and the motives of their public conduct, the Committee trust that the other counties, cities, and boroughs, who concur in these political sentiments, in whole or

in part, will co-operate with the intended general deputation, by appointing Deputies, with power to support, in that Assembly, such of these propositions of reform as they may respectively approve. By a long train of fatal misconduct, the wealth, the grandeur, the super-eminent power of this Empire are, perhaps, irrecoverably lost. But in the general wreck, which threatens the fortunes of the public, their vigorous and timely interposition may yet preserve the LIBERTY and the CONSTITUTION of BRITAIN.

Paper IV.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association of the County of York, on the 4th day of January, 1781.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir James Norcliffe
Sir George Strickland
Mr. Henry Duncombe
Mr. Hildyard
Rev. William Mafon
Dr. Swainston
General Hale
Mr. Walker
Rev. John Bourne
Mr. Sykes

Mr. Dring
The Dean of York
Mr. R. Wilfon
Mr. Walker, jun.
Mr. John Milnes
Mr. Ellsley
Mr. St. A. Ward
Mr. Courtney
The Earl of Effingham
Lieutenant Col. Thornton

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Rev.

Rev. Fred. Dodsworth
Mr. Strickland
Mr. Place
Mr. Croft, jun.
Mr. Battle
Mr. Croft

Sir John Legard
Mr. Dixon
Rev. John Robinson
Mr. Grimston
Mr. Osbaldeston
Rev. James Wilkinfon

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the armed Association of this city, for their resolute and well timed exertions in support of the laws of their country, and the peace and safety of the city, during the wanton and unprovoked riots which immediately followed the last election for the county.

Resolved, That David Hartley, Esq; be requested to permit this Committee to publish his excellent address to them, dated Jan. 3, 1781.

Resolved, That if Mr. Hartley shall give his permission to this Committee to publish his address, copies thereof be immediately transmitted, with their recommendation, to the other Petitioning and Associated Bodies throughout the kingdom.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned till Wednesday, the 9th day of May next, at ten in the forenoon.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper V.

Paper V.

Letter from C. TURNER, Esq; to Mr. WILLIAM GRAY, jun. Clerk of the Committee of Association of the County of York.

HACKWOOD, Dec. 31, 1780.

Sir,

YOUR circular letter of the 23d instant, by being directed to Kirkleatham, I received on Thursday, and therefore could not sooner answer it, as the post goes from hence three times a-week.

I beg you will assure the gentlemen of the Association, that I lament much the not being able, from ill health, to assist at their Meeting on the 3d of January, for no individual in this country, I will be bold to say, has more at heart the restoration of the rights of Representation than myself, from a clear and decisive conviction that this country has been systematically enslaved by those powers who, in every sense of the word, ought to have been its guardians.

Calamities that seem approaching, with hasty strides, may providentially open the eyes of the deluded; but the abandoned part of the Associators in Government, who make fortunes out

of the plunder of the public, are so fortified by the means which so extensive and expensive a war throws into the hands of the executive power, as to render it necessary not only to be peculiarly circumspect with respect to them, but cautious, to a degree, that we sow no dissensions among ourselves by aiming at first at too many and too great objects.

By delivering this letter to the Chairman, you will very much oblige,

Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

C. TURNER.

Paper VI.

Letter from the Earl of BUCHAN, to Mr. WILLIAM GRAY, jun.

EDINBURGH, April 20, 1781.

Sir,

ON my return from London, on the 26th of March, I found upon my table here, a parcel enclosing the general Address of the Association of the county of York to the Electors of Great-Britain, and the Address of David Hartley,

lley, Esq; to the Committee on the state of Public affairs, the perusal of which papers is recommended to me by Sir James Norcliffe, at the desire of the Committee of Association in the county of York.

In whatever particulars I may differ from the sentiments and plans contained in these papers, I think it my duty respectfully to acknowledge the receipt of them, and through your means to acquaint the gentlemen of the Committee, that I have carefully and impartially perused them.

It is now eighteen years since I have arrived at that age when the laws of this country entitle a man to take an active part in its political interests, and to judge for himself with respect to political affairs. A great part of those important years have been by me employed either in the study or in the promotion of what I thought essential to the welfare of my country, and although my public services have been uniformly rejected or neglected, by the King's Ministers, my application to the important study has been unabated, and my zeal for the public service unshaken.

It is a maxim of mine, which I hope I shall retain while I exist, that our duties towards the common-wealth are not to be relinquished on account of the faults or errors of those whom the Executive Power has thought fit to invest with his active powers in that common-wealth. Were it not from the influence of this maxim,

I might plead exemption from political energy, since I belong to an order of men who stand distinguished from the rest of the community at large, by having long since surrendered their political liberty, and consented to permit the Minister, for the time being, to nominate their Representatives.

Against this surrender I have in vain struggled ever since I came among them, and if I were to yield to the modern spirit of resentment against Ministers, on my account, I might abundantly display my indignation against a succession of Ministers who have excluded me from the employments for which birth, my turn of mind, and my unremitted train of study have fitted me.

But, Sir, my love towards my fellow citizens is of too high a form to yield to such personal considerations. I consider myself, tho' stripped by the meanness and venality of my brethren of the only privilege belonging to my order, as still belonging to the Public and to the State which protects me.

I am sensible, however, of the importance of that civil liberty which ought to belong to me as a degraded, though not dishonoured, native of Great-Britain, and accordingly I shall, in as few words as possible, give you my sentiments on the mass of matter contained in the communications which the York Committee and Mr. Hartley have thought proper to make to the public and to me.

After

After the most mature consideration of the subject at large, I venture to give you my opinion that the diseases of the British Constitution are interwoven with, and arise from the very nature of that much admired, but, as I think, very imperfect Constitution;

The Constitution of Great-Britain, originating from the gradual introduction of popular weight by the effects of literature and commerce, has been continually in a state of fluctuation. Before the reign of Henry VII. our Constitution was a concentrated aristocracy only, in some degree invaded by the gradual effects of the Corporations from the reign of that Prince to the Revolution in the year 1688. The Constitution was continually purging itself of its antient forms, and tending more and more towards a commonwealth of the people, when the Prince of Orange was made King; he was stripped by the Statute of the pretended powers of his predecessors, but the form of Government remained the same.

A continual bounty was to be offered to the Prince for his intelligent management of the revenues of the State, for the purpose of making up the deficiencies of the old prerogative, and the Candidates, for places in the Senate, were to have a continual bounty for the corruption of the voters, to place *them* where they were to treat with the Prince for the price of the liberty of the people.

By the nature of election, a continual scene of intemperance,

intemperance, corruption of manners, and bribery, was to be kept up among the people; and this baneful engine was to extend its influence to the remotest part of the country, and to contaminate the cottage, as fully as the palace of the Prince, or the pandarous seats of lubricity in the streets of the metropolis.

In other states, the odious manners of an overgrown and luxurious capital, reach only the limits of a corrupted atmosphere which surrounds it; in this, it taints every thing we see, hear, feel, or can discern, by the powers of our understanding.

I am convinced, therefore, that the cause of all our misfortunes, and the *perpetual deterioration* of our country which we must submit to behold, is to be fought for, and fought for alone, in the nature of the Constitution itself.

Quo semel imbutâ, quodcunque infundis, acescit. *

Let us not imagine that triennial or annual Parliaments, melting the boroughs into the counties, and far less adding one hundred Members to the Senate, will cure the disease in question.

The new modelling of the Constitution would cost a civil war, and after all, things be no better than they were before.

* The lines in Horace, here alluded to, but altered by Lord Buchan, stand thus :

*"Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu."*

"Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcunque infundis acescit."

The people whose manners are already corrupted, would still sell themselves to the best bidders, or the most artful rogues, and the elected would continue to sell themselves to the Prince or his Ministers, for offices, pensions, contracts, and ribbons, or titles.—In short, the aphorism of Hippocrates, the father of Greek Physicians, would still apply to this as to the disease of the body, “Errors in the first concoction are never, or at least seldom, cured by a second.” Upon the whole, therefore, however I may approve of the concern expressed by the Committee and Mr. Hartley, on account of the growing evils of the state, I am convinced that the Plan proposed would not be effectual towards their removal, nor any other be successful short of a rotatory system of election, founded upon independent qualifications, which I fear would be impracticable, except in a state where great concussions opened a door to new models; and as things *are*, virtuous combinations formed for the restoration of public and private manners, seem to me to be the only means of saving this sinking state and nation.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

BUCHAN.

Paper VII.

Paper VII.

Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association of the County of York, on the 9th day of May, 1781.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Sir George Strickland	Mr. Tooker
Sir William St. Quintin	Mr. Salthmarsh, jun.
Sir William Anderfon	Mr. Walker
The Earl of Effingham	Dr. Swainston
The Dean of York	Mr. Booth
Mr. Morritt	Mr. Walker, jun.
Rev. William Cayley	Rev. Luke Yarker
Rev. John Robinson	Mr. Rawson
Mr. St. Quintin	Rev. John Dixon
Rev. William Comber	Mr. Dring
Mr. P. Milnes	Mr. Maude
Rev. William Mason	Mr. John Milnes
Rev. James Wilkinson	Mr. Foljambe
Mr. Shore	Rev. William Dealtry
Mr. Yorke	Mr. Elsiey
Mr. Croft	General Hale
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. Chaloner
Mr. Edmunds	Mr. Sykes
Mr. Cradock	Mr. Withers
Mr. R. S. Milnes	Rev. Frederick Dodsworth
Mr. Childers	Mr. Dalton
Mr. Strickland	Mr. Barlow
Mr. Grimston	Mr. Bell
Mr. Battle	

Read the Report from the Delegates appointed at the last Meeting of this Committee.*

Resolved,

* See the Report, Paper 8, page 332.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, Samuel Shore, Esq; and Sir James Norcliffe, Bart. for their diligent attendance on the business of their delegation, and for their able support of the measures they were deputed to promote; and that this Committee highly approve of their conduct.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Sir George Savile, Bart. for his ready attention and support to the Petitions of this and other counties, cities, and places, for reforming the waste of public money, and reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown, which ought to be diminished; and that the Chairman be desired to communicate these thanks.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Mr. Duncombe, for his ready attention and support to the Petitions of this and other counties, cities, and places, for reforming the waste of public money, and reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown, which ought to be diminished; and that the Chairman be desired to communicate these thanks.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to Mr. Dunning, for his ready attention and support to the Petitions of this and other counties, cities, and places, for reforming the waste of public money, and reducing the increased and increasing influence of the

the Crown, which ought to be diminished; and that the Chairman be desired to communicate these thanks.

Resolved, That this Committee think it highly expedient, and most earnestly recommend it to their fellow-subjects, to persevere without remission in the pursuit of the objects of this Association, and not to doubt but that measures guided by a temperate, though steady resolution, and founded on the reasonableness and necessity of the reformation aimed at, must in the end be crowned with success.

Resolved, That this day's report of the Delegates be printed and published, and that the Chairman be desired to transmit copies thereof to the different Committees of Petitioning or Associated Counties and Places.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned till to-morrow morning, at ten o'clock.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

YORK-TAVERN, May 10, 1781.

*At the adjourned Meeting of the Committee of
Affociation,*

The Rev. C. WYVILL, in the Chair,
Resolved unanimously,

THAT the Chairman be requested to write a letter to Sir George Savile, to acquaint him that the Committee having been informed of the very precarious state of health in which he thought it his duty to attend Parliament, for the sake of opposing the late scandalously extravagant loan, desire to express their grateful sense of his zeal for the honour and interest of his country; but to assure him at the same time, that however sorry they should have been if a contract so usurious in itself, and so calculated to promote the corrupt system long complained of, had passed without attracting the notice, and exciting the indignation of every friend to the English Constitution, nevertheless they should think their country poorly recompensed indeed, if even success in opposition to that ruinous measure had been obtained at the price of a life so important to the public.

Resolved, That this Committee be adjourned to Wednesday the 17th day of October next, subject to an earlier call either by the Sub-Committee, or by the Chairman at the requisition of any five Members.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper VIII.

Paper VIII.

Report of Proceedings at a General Meeting of Deputies from the Associated Counties, &c. held in London in the Months of March and April last; submitted by the Rev. CHRISTOPHER WYVILL, SAMUEL SHORE, Esq; and Sir JAMES NORCLIFFE, Bart. to the Committee of Association for the County of York, on this 9th day of May, 1781.

A Previous Meeting of several Deputies having been obtained at the St. Alban's Tavern, on the 24th of February, 1781, to consider the proper time and place for opening the General Deputation; it was unanimously resolved to hold the First General Meeting of Deputies on the 3d of March ensuing; and the Common Council of the city of London having in the mean-time come to a resolution to allow the New Common Council Chamber in Guildhall to the Deputies, the First General Meeting was accordingly held in the said Chamber in Guildhall, on the 3d of March, 1781.

At that first Meeting of the General Deputation, it was resolved, That application should be made

made to Parliament during the present Session, for correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of the public money, and for reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown, which ought to be diminished.

At the adjourned Meeting on the 10th of March, it was resolved, That a Committee should be appointed to form and report to the Meeting on the 17th of March, a Petition equivalent in its prayer, to the several Petitions of the people presented to the House of Commons in the last Session of Parliament; and the Rev. C. Wyvill, Chairman of the Meeting, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. Baker, Dr. Jebb, Mr. Bellas, Mr. Hollis, Lord Viscount Mahon, Sir Geo. Yonge, Mr. Sawbridge, and Mr. Fox, were chosen of the Committee accordingly.

On the 17th of March, the Meeting of Deputies was transferred from the Guildhall to the St. Alban's-Tavern, the Corporation of London having thought fit to retract their courtesy to the Deputies, to rescind the offer of their room at Guildhall, and to abolish their Committee of Association. On that day, the Deputies from the associated counties and the city of Westminster, received the following Petition, reported by their Committee:

*To the Honourable the Commons of Great-Britain,
in Parliament assembled,*

“ The humble Petition of the several persons whose names are hereunto subscribed Freeholders of the respective counties of York, Surry, Hertford, Huntingdon, Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Devon, and Nottingham, and Electors of the city of Westminster,

“ Sheweth,

“ THAT this nation hath been engaged for several years, in a most expensive and unfortunate war. That many of our valuable Colonies having actually declared themselves independent, have formed a strict confederacy with the ancient enemies of Great-Britain; that the consequences of these combined misfortunes, have been a large addition to the national debt; an heavy accumulation of taxes; a rapid decline of the trade, manufactures, and land rents of the kingdom.

“ That notwithstanding this calamitous and impoverished state of the nation, much public money has been improvidently squandered, and that many individuals enjoy sinecure places, efficient places with exorbitant emoluments, and pensions unmerited by public service, to a large and still increasing amount; whence the Crown has acquired a great and unconstitutional influence,

ence, which, if not checked, may soon prove fatal to the liberties of this country. And your Petitioners further shew, that your Petitioners, jointly with others, Freeholders of several counties, and Electors of several cities and towns in this kingdom, did in the last Session of the late Parliament, present to the Honourable House of Commons, humble Petitions, requesting that some remedy might be provided by the wisdom of Parliament, against the extensive and unconstitutional influence of the Crown, and some stop might be put to the lavish expenditure of public money.

“ And your Petitioners beg leave to state, that the matter contained in the Petitions so presented by your Petitioners and others, was taken into consideration by that Honourable House, and on due and mature deliberation, that Honourable House resolved,

1st, “ That it is necessary to declare, that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.

2d, “ That it is competent to this House to examine into and correct abuses in the expenditure of the Civil List revenues, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it shall appear expedient to the wisdom of this House so to do.

3d, “ That it is the duty of this House to provide as far as may be, an immediate and ef-

fectual redress of the abuses complained of, in the Petitions presented to this House, from the different counties, cities, and towns, in this kingdom.

“ And your Petitioners beg leave further to state, that before that Honourable House had effected that diminution of the influence of the Crown, and had provided an effectual redress of the grievances complained of in the said Petitions, the said Parliament of Great-Britain, was, by his Majesty's Royal Proclamation dissolved.

“ Your Petitioners, therefore, on behalf of themselves and others, their fellow-subjects who joined with your Petitioners in the said Petitions, appealing to the justice of this Honourable House, do most earnestly request, both for the relief of the subject and the safety of the Constitution, that this Honourable House will proceed to inquire by what means that diminution of the influence of the Crown may be obtained, which the last House of Commons declared to be necessary, and that this Honourable House will proceed to examine into all the branches of the expenditure of the public money; and also to inquire what expences can be retrenched by an abolition of sinecure and unnecessary places, by a reformation in respect of pensions unmerited by public services, and by a reduction of the exorbitant emoluments of office, and that
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the produce be appropriated to the necessities of the State, in such manner as to the wisdom of Parliament shall seem meet: And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c. &c."

And it was unanimously resolved, That the Petition be approved by the Meeting, and that the Chairman, Sir F. Vincent, and Sir R. Smyth, be deputed to wait on Sir George Savile, to request him to present the Petition to the House of Commons, and also to wait on Mr. Dunning, and to request him to second Sir George Savile; with which request those faithful friends of the people most readily promised to comply. To preserve union in the General Deputation, and to secure the reception of the Petition by the House of Commons, it was thought expedient that the Petition should be signed by the several Deputies as Freeholders of their respective counties, &c. who did not in that instance expressly assume the character of Deputies.

On the 19th of March, therefore, the Petition was signed in that manner, by the following gentlemen, viz,

James Townsend	Freeholders	R. J. Lawrence	Freeholders of
Robert Bromley	of	John Jebb	Huntingdon-
George Bellas	Middlesex	James Phipps	shire
F. Vincent	Freeholders	G. Jennings	Freeholders of
John S. Budgen	of	W. Baker	Hertfordshire
John Nicholls	Surry	Edw Bentinck	Freeholder of
J. Trecothick			Nottinghamshire
C. J. Fox		J. Chichester	Freeholders of
R. Fitzpatrick	Electors	James Hamlyn	Devonshire
John Brett	of	C. Wyvill	Freeholders
J. Burgoyne	Westminster	Samuel Shore	of
R. B. Sheridan		James Norcliffe	Yorkshire
John Churchill			

Mahon
Richard Rycroft
Edm. Marshall

} Freeholders
of
Kent

Robert Smith

R. M. T. Chiswell

Richard Baker

T. Brand Hollis

J. Redman

} Freeholders
of
Essex

The laborious and hazardous attendance of Sir George Savile, in a very infirm state of health, to move Parliament to inquire into the late extraordinary loan, unfortunately disabled him to give his promised assistance, without a delay, which would have had the worst effects. On this account his excellent colleague, Mr. H. Duncombe, seconded by Mr. Dunning, presented the Petition to the House of Commons, on the 2d of April. It was at that time laid upon the table of the House for future consideration; and since the Meeting of Parliament, after the Easter recess, notice has been given by Sir George Savile, that on the 8th of May he would move the House to refer the Petition to a Committee, in order that proper measures might be pursued to give that redress to the people which their great and acknowledged grievances so loudly demand.

On the 24th of March it was resolved by the General Deputation, That the addition of at least one hundred Members to the House of Commons, to be chosen in a due proportion in the different counties in the kingdom of Great-Britain, would be a measure tending strongly to correct the gross inadequacy in the representation of Parliament, and the extensive public evils resulting from it.

On

On the 7th of April it was resolved, That when, by the peaceful and legal efforts of the people, a more frugal management of the public purse, and a more adequate representation in Parliament, shall have been obtained, the repeal of the septennial bill would form a strong barrier against the inroads of Parliamentary corruption, and the alarming influence of the Crown.

Your Deputies had thus obtained the concurrence of the General Meeting in resolutions equivalent to the propositions for a Parliamentary reform adopted by the county of York; but they were not encouraged to recommend an application to Parliament on the ground of these propositions. For notwithstanding the approbation of some of the best and wisest men of this country, a disposition favourable to this plan of Parliamentary reformation did not sufficiently appear in the great body of the Nobles, or in the House of Representatives; and the General Deputation was not supported by the declared sense of the people with sufficient vigour to bring on the momentous business of a reform of Parliament. To all our most experienced friends it seemed adviseable to postpone that arduous task to a more favourable, but, they trust, not a very distant season. Your Deputies therefore ventured in this instance to depart from your instructions, trusting that the circumstances of the case will, in your opinion, be their justification.

A resolution to dissolve the General Deputation was agreed to by the Meeting, on the 21st of April.

Your Deputies have it not in their power to report to this Committee the event of the Petition to the House of Commons, as their decision on that measure is not yet known. Possibly the result may be favourable to your hopes; but, on the supposition that no immediate redress of grievances will be obtained in consequence of the Deputies' Petition, what (it may be asked) is the advantage to the public, derived from this measure of a General Deputation? To this question your Deputies trust a satisfactory answer may be given. It is not their province to pronounce whence the present dejection of the nation proceeds; but whether it arise from the widely-extended operation of corruption, or from the fear and apprehension which the enormous power of the Crown hath impressed upon the people, or from other causes blended and combined with these—it is fortunate surely that those causes have not produced universal despondence. In this discouraging situation of our country, men have been found in every part of the kingdom, whom neither corruption could seduce, nor the frown of power could terrify; who have not ceased to point out to their fellow-subjects the impending danger, and, with a manly firmness, to reprobate a venal system of government.—While independent men, supported by large bodies

dies of their fellow-citizens, have the virtue thus to resist corruption, the antient English vigour has not abandoned this nation; the hope of a radical reformation cannot be ill-founded; their honest example cannot fail to animate the timorous, to awe the corrupt, and gradually to restore the genuine love of liberty and the English constitution.

Your Deputies therefore, notwithstanding the present unfavourable aspect of public affairs, do most earnestly exhort and conjure this Committee not to despair of the common weal. No;—let us proceed with unabated fortitude; let us call on our dispirited countrymen with unwearied perseverance; let us warn them with faithful zeal to unite in defence of their common rights, against the overbearing influence of the Crown, and the progress of general venality.—The means to be employed to check that profligate system are peaceful, orderly, and legal; the end itself is just and necessary, and by a firm and timely union of the people, certainly not unattainable. The necessity of that union, on the solid grounds of a Parliamentary reformation, will become still more apparent; the public confidence will follow and support the exertions of disinterested men; the sense of danger, and the growing distresses of the nation, will rouse the indolent and the inconsiderate; and finally unite in the public cause, every class and description of our independent fellow-subjects, not totally
lost

lost to every feeling of integrity and public spirit.

C. WYVILL,
SAMUEL SHORE,
JAMES NORCLIFFE.

Paper IX.

Letter from the Rev. C. WYVILL, to Sir G. SAVILE.

BURTON-HALL, May 12, 1781.

Dear Sir,

IT is with the highest satisfaction I obey the directions of the Committee of Association for the county of York, by transmitting to you the inclosed copy of two Resolutions of thanks, for your late great and meritorious exertions in the public service, which that Committee unanimously voted on the 9th and 10th of May, 1781. If language more strongly expressive of gratitude and perfect confidence had occurred to the Committee, it would have corresponded better with their sentiments; and certainly would have been adopted on this occasion,

I am, dear Sir,

With the highest esteem and regard,

Your most obedient servant,

C. WYVILL.

Sir G. SAVILE.

Paper X.

Letter from Sir G. SAVILE to the Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONDON, May 18, 1781.

Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED the night before last your very kind letters, one of them inclosing two Resolutions of the Committee of the 9th and 10th instant.

I do not know how I have in my power better (if indeed at all) to express the sense I have of the honour done me by these Resolutions, than by assuring you of the lively gratitude with which I receive such tokens of the favour of my constituents.

However conscious I am that their kindness has much over-rated my title to thanks or to praise, one part of the reward I hope to hold fast, because it depends upon my will and not my ability to serve those who sent me; I mean their confidence. If I have earned that, I have well spent my time, and well directed my endeavours—at least to my own private account and feelings, however miserable and poor the success be which has attended those endeavours to the public. The subject of the second Resolution,
regarding

regarding what is so truly stiled the scandalously extravagant Loan, may possibly lead some men to judge in part even of the cause of that want of success.—But the House of Commons having itself declined to enter into any investigation of an affair in which its own purity was so nearly concerned, and so openly arraigned, it becomes a simple individual only to mention, (what, indeed, every newspaper will tell) that the Minister's bargain was selling at the market, at the rate of above a million advanced price, at the very moment that the House of Commons, so concerned and so arraigned, was confirming the contract.

Without making farther comments on this transaction, I mean just to state why it was that this particular business seemed to me to call more pressing than almost any other for public examination. The earnestness I gave way to on that occasion was in truth attended with fatigue and inconvenience, rather than any degree of risk; and in that respect, I am persuaded, could we have succeeded, we should have so far smoothed the way to other detections and other reforms, that our future labours would, on the whole, have been less, as well as more pleasant.

Of those detections and those reforms I do not I confess see the least present prospect. In future and corrupt Parliaments, the greater the public calamities, the better loan and the better premium it will only require to procure them to be
voted

voted blessings; and corruption and extravagance will very naturally keep pace with public poverty and wretchedness. I meant only to have troubled you with my grateful thanks, and to have begged you to take the earliest and most proper method of conveying them to the Gentlemen of the Committee; but I found it almost impossible not to advert somewhat particularly to a subject which, by the second Resolution, seems to have struck the Committee, as well worthy their attention.

I cannot help adding my best acknowledgments to you, for your obliging attention and kindness to me;

And am, dear Sir,

With great regard,

Your most obedient

And obliged humble servant,

G. SAVILE.

Rev. C. WYVILL,

Chairman of the Committee for
the county of York.

Paper XI.

Paper XI.

Letter from the Rev. C. WYVILL to HENRY DUNCOMBE, Esq.

BURTON-HALL, May 14, 1781.

Dear Sir,

IT is with the highest satisfaction I obey the directions of the Committee of Association for the county of York, by transmitting to you the inclosed copy of a Resolution of thanks, unanimously voted by that Committee, on the 9th of May, 1781, for your distinguished exertions in support of the Petition to Parliament by the late General Meeting of Deputies.

The gratitude of the people is sure to follow the fidelity of their Representatives; it is a debt, Sir, which a very considerable body of your Constituents with pleasure pay to you; but, at the same time, they cannot but lament the infelicity of these times, when their just commendation of an honest and independent Member of Parliament is an implied censure of Parliament itself.

I am, dear Sir,

With the highest esteem and regard,

Your most faithful

And obedient servant,

C. WYVILL.

H. DUNCOMBE, Esq.

Paper XII.

Letter from HENRY DUNCOMBE, Esq; to the Rev.
C. WYVILL.

Saturday, May 19, 1781.

Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED last night your very obliging letter, containing the thanks of the Committee, and must own, I learn with extreme satisfaction, that my conduct in Parliament has, in any degree, deserved the approbation or justified the confidence of my Constituents.

The event of the Petition of the Deputies was not indeed favourable to our wishes; but I will anticipate the prospect of a radical reformation of public abuses, yet, I am persuaded attainable; but attainable only by the determined efforts and legal union of honest and independent men. The principles of the Committee, which I have ever avowed, and am proud to avow, have been amply confirmed to me in the course of one session, by my observations on the conduct of public affairs; and I am more than ever convinced, that the only hopes of security to our liberties,

liberties, and of redress of our grievances, are to be derived from the integrity of Parliaments, and a juster representation of the people.

You will please to make my most respectful acknowledgements to the Gentlemen of the Committee, for the honour they have thought proper to confer on me; and to accept my best thanks yourself for your very obliging manner in the communicating of it.

I am, Sir,

With great respect,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

H. DUNCOMBE.

Rev. Mr. WYVILL,

Burton, Bedale,

Yorkshire.

Paper XIII.

Paper XIII.

*Letter from the Rev. C. WYVILL, to JOHN DUN-
NING, Esq.*

BURTON-HALL, May 14, 1781.

Dear Sir,

IT is with the highest satisfaction I obey the directions of the Committee of Association for the county of York, by transmitting to you the inclosed copy of a Resolution of thanks, unanimously voted by that Committee on the 9th of May, 1781, for your distinguished support of the Petition to Parliament, by the late General Meeting of Deputies.—Public oeconomy is at all times necessary, but it is more especially so in times of great national calamity, such as we have the misfortune to experience. And if the English people have any right to Petition Parliament at all, they must have a right to meet and consult together, in order to exercise that right in a peaceable and orderly manner which may best promote the common advantage. These are the sentiments of a large and respectable body of the Yorkshire gentlemen, and in these sentiments they are happy to find themselves confirmed by the authority of one of the ablest Lawyers of the age; whose much

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higher praise it is, that he deserves to be considered as one of the firmest friends of our free Constitution. The Petition from the Meeting of Deputies was a measure for the success of which the Committee of Yorkshire was peculiarly anxious; and nothing could have given greater weight to their assertion of the rectitude and legality of that measure, or better hopes of its final decision, than your co-operation in its support with Sir G. Savile and Mr. Duncombe.

I am, dear Sir,

With the highest esteem and regard,

Your most obedient servant,

C. WYVILL.

JOHN DUNNING, Esq.

Paper XIV.

Letter from JOHN DUNNING, Esq; to the Rev.
C. WYVILL.

LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS, June 13, 1781.

Dear Sir,

I WAS honoured with your obliging letter, in the due course of the post, communicating to me the thanks of the Committee of Association of the county of York, for my

my attention and support to the Petitions of that and other counties, cities, and places, for reforming the waste of public money, and reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown.

If I could in return have given you any intelligence that would have been acceptable to you and to that respectable Committee of the success of the late Petition, I should not have failed to use the first opportunity of communicating it to you; but as the issue of that measure was just what you had foreseen and foretold, and I had nothing to convey to you but my acknowledgments of the honour done me by your favourable acceptance of my impotent endeavours to co-operate with you to those important objects of your Association, I trusted that you would excuse my deferring it to a season of more leisure than that in which I received your favour.

Little occurred in the debate, which I should have thought worth troubling you with if I had written to you sooner; but one thing I think I may tell you, which is, that we heard much less than we were led to expect of the illegality of Committees, Associations, and Deputations; certainly very little argument to make out their supposed illegality. Indeed it would not have been easy without controverting the right of Petitioning, to question the legality of associating and appointing Committees and Deputies to conduct the Petitions and promote the ob-

jects of them. I believe it was found more difficult than those who were understood to have undertaken it were aware of when they undertook it.

One good at least results from your perseverance. It has shewn, beyond contradiction, that there are still some men left who do not despair of the Republic, at a time when that despair is so general and the causes of it so obvious, as would, if any thing would, justify it.

In such times, it must surely be matter of satisfaction to know that there are men distinguished by their independence and their integrity, associated for the protection and preservation of our most valuable interests, of whose motives calumny has wanted ingenuity to frame a plausible misrepresentation. Men who so well deserve the public confidence cannot fail to acquire it.

I am,

With great respect and esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

J. DUNNING.

Rev. Mr. WYVILL.

Paper XV.

Paper XV.

Resolutions of the Committee of Association of
the County of York, on the 17th day of Octo-
ber, 1781.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.

The Earl of Eppingham	Mr. St. Quintin
The Dean of York	Dr. Swainton
Mr. Chaloner	Mr. F. Smyth
Rev. W. Mason	Mr. James Milnes, jun.
Sir George Strickland	Mr. R. S. Milnes
Mr. Morritt	Lieut. Col. Thornton
Mr. H. Duncombe	Rev. John Dixon
General Hale	Rev. L. Yarker
Sir R. D. Hildyard	Mr. Baynes, jun.
Sir James Norcliffe	Mr. Booth
Mr. Strickland of Welborn	Mr. Rawlson
Mr. Strickland of Beverley	Mr. Mathews
Mr. Tooker	Mr. Athorpe
Mr. Grimston	Rev. James Wilkinson
Mr. Shore	Mr. Turner
Mr. Sykes	Rev. William Comber
Mr. Withers	Mr. Stovin
Mr. Cradock	Rev. James Lawton
Rev. John Robinson	Mr. Hill
Mr. Walker	Sir William Milner
Mr. Walker, jun.	Mr. Lloyd
Mr. Peel	Mr. Dawson
Mr. Dring	Mr. Duncombe
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. Hayes
Rev. William Dade	Mr. Courtney
Mr. Foljambe	Mr. Arthington
Rev. John Bourne	Mr. Maude
Mr. P. Milnes	Mr. Dalton
Rev. William Cayley	Mr. Croft
Mr. Yorke	Rev. Richard Shuttleworth
Mr. Dixon	elected this day.

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Resolved,

Resolved, That the following Members be added to this Committee:

William Bagshaw, Esq; of Coates-Hall
Rev. Richard Shuttleworth of Kirkcathlam
Jonathan Walker, Esq; of Masbrough
William Warner, Esq; of Foston
Henry Legard, Esq; of Beverley

Whereas it has been represented to this Committee, that the conduct of the Clergy, who are Members of this Association, hath been censured from High Authority; and that they have been given to understand that *their late efforts in support of the Liberty and Constitution of this country were foreign to the function of a Clergyman, and not the road to preferment.**

Resolved, That a Protestant, by entering into Holy Orders does not abandon his civil rights.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Committee be given to those Reverend Gentlemen who, thus preferring the public good to their own private emoluments, have stood forth the firm friends to the true interests of their country.

Read the paper intituled, "A second Address from the Committee of Association for the county of York, to the Electors of the counties, cities, and boroughs, within the kingdom of Great-Britain."

Resolved,

* The indecent censure of Markham, Archbishop of York, in his Visitorial Charges about this time.

Resolved, with only two dissenting voices, That the Address now read be adopted as the act of this Assembly, and that the Chairman be requested to publish the same in the manner he shall judge most proper.*

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to the Thursday in Easter-week next, subject to an earlier call by the Sub-Committee, or of the Chairman at the request of any five Members.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

* For this Address, see Paper XVI. below.

Paper XVI.

A Second Address from the Committee of Association of the County of York, to the Electors of the Counties, Cities, and Boroughs, within the Kingdom of Great-Britain.

PARLIAMENT, in its original form, seems to have been admirably fitted to resist the attack of corruption. In that primitive state, a majority of the Electors of England appointed a majority of the House of Commons; and in fact, the right of election annually vested in the body

of the people a regular and complete controul over their Trustees. In an Assembly so constituted, the poison of corruption could hardly find admittance in any dangerous degree; respect to the Constituent Body would generally operate as a preservative against it; and on any appearance of infection, that effectual remedy which the public possessed would be instantly applied. But our easy unsuspicious ancestors unwisely suffered our Monarchs from Henry VI. down to Queen Elizabeth, to mar the ancient Constitution by a most disproportionate addition of boroughs. By that unhappy negligence, the nation lost in substance the just and necessary right of controul; and then, the corruption of a Parliament, no longer checked by the general voice of the people, ceased to be an impracticable attempt.

But though the corruptibility of Parliament may be justly dated from that innovation of Royal Authority, the actual corruption of it was reserved for a more unfortunate period. The seeds of political depravity were for ages latent in the defective frame of the House of Commons; and it was possible they might still have remained there, in a state of harmless inactivity, if chance, and the ill-judged parsimony of our forefathers had not presented to the Crown the opportunity for Parliamentary seduction. From the depreciation of money, the ancient salaries paid by the counties, &c. to their
respective

respective Members, had become too insignificant to be worth their acceptance; and from a most absurd frugality, the necessary augmentation had been improvidently omitted. Hence arose a facility to create a corrupt dependence on the Crown, just when the danger of all attempts to controul or abolish Parliament by force had been fully proved by repeated experience. The growing disposition in that Assembly to listen to temptation, was not long unobserved; it was seized with alacrity, and improved with assiduity; and thus the evils which the inequality of our popular representation is adapted to produce, were at last drawn forth to actual existence.

The virtue of Parliament which had resisted every effort of violence, was soon relaxed by the skilful distribution of emolument. As this lucrative intercourse grew habitual, their ancient jealousy of the Crown decreased; their responsibility to that Public from whom they derived their existence, gradually became an obsolete idea; and in its stead, more courtly maxims of duty, better suited to the new object of their devotion, were easily introduced. At last, a Coalition unknown to the genuine Constitution took place; and Parliament, now disengaged from the body of the nation, like the Senate of Imperial Rome, meekly submitted to a dependence on that power, whose encroachments it was originally formed to prevent and controul.

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To men of political sagacity, it was not difficult to discern this change in our system of Government. By them its rise and progress were distinctly marked, and its pernicious consequences were fairly foretold. But the public, with a generous credulity, continued to hold Parliaments in that veneration which their former fidelity had so well deserved. The forms of the Constitution, they saw, were still maintained; and the parade of debate still gave to that obsequious Assembly the air and semblance of its ancient freedom. During the earlier part of this period, the nation was too much dazzled with the splendour of military glory, to remark the growing influence of the Crown. Afterwards when the practice of corruption was avowed by the Minister himself, the dissatisfaction of the public was lulled into acquiescence by the flow of general wealth, and the mildness of Administration. The two first Princes of the Hanoverian line hardly knew the extent of that authority which they had so recently obtained. Their right to the throne was not admitted without dispute; and the deposition of James, which had led to their elevation, was an instructive lesson which they could never forget. From these considerations, and from the natural goodness and moderation of those Princes, they were content to exercise their authority with caution and lenity; never exceeding the limits of the law, and manifesting on all occasions a respectful

respectful deference to the sense of the public. Under their gracious and fortunate Administration, the mischiefs of corruption were happily palliated; and hence, rational disapprobation, and the apprehension of evil, yielded to the sense of ease and actual prosperity.

But those popular maxims of Government, were less suitable to that situation of superior power, to which their successor attained. *He was born and bred a Briton*; and he had the fortune to engage the affections of those men, who, in apparent contradiction to their high monarchical principles, had long endeavoured to depress his family; but who at last forgetting *the exiled Prince*, transferred to *him* all the warmth of their zeal and attachment. He was aided by the accession of these natural partizans of the Crown, and he was enriched by that augmentation of patronage, which before the conciliation of his new friends, had been unwarily established as a balance to their disaffection. In these circumstances, instead of the condescension and cautious policy of the preceding reigns, Ministers were encouraged to adopt, and enabled to realize more lofty ideas of Government. In their conception, it ceased to be necessary to conceal from the public eye, the full extent of the influence of the Crown, and by their instigation, an open and unscrupulous exercise of it was resolved on.

A fit opportunity for displaying the plenitude of power was quickly found. The popular principles, the zeal, the intrepidity, perhaps the indiscretion of a private gentleman, had given displeasure, *where* it was most dangerous to displease. To gratify resentment *there*, the Commons were solicited to punish the offender; and that Assembly could stoop to oppress an already injured individual, and in violation of the first and most important principle of the Constitution, to exclude him from his lawful seat in Parliament. During the course of that famous persecution, England first beheld a spectacle, which, if the antient proportion had been maintained in the popular representation, must have been for ever unseen; a House of Commons distrusted by the nation, and at variance with it. Hence, by turns those Petitions of the People to the Crown against the treachery of their Trustees; and to their Trustees against the great and increasing influence of the Crown. But as the Minister of the Sovereign wisely protected his auxiliary Commons from the indignation of their Constituents; his faithful Allies have since returned the obligation, with all the zeal of gratitude. The studied contempt with which those complaints were treated from the Throne, has been fully repaid in the Senate, by a more insulting neglect of those Petitions, which were acknowledged to be just. The proofs of the absolute ascendant of the Crown, have thus been rendered

rendered complete and indisputable; the dream of the independence of Parliament, so long and so fondly believed, is now a detected illusion; and in consequence of that discovery, discontents have arisen in the nation, which can only be suppressed by the utter extinction of liberty, OR SATISFIED BY SOME SUBSTANTIAL REFORMATION OF PARLIAMENT.

It would be injurious, from the present inactivity of many of our countrymen, to suppose they are not attached to the cause of liberty, with the same generous ardour which distinguished their ancestors.—The mass of the people is yet untainted by corruption; it is still animated with equal zeal, and enlightened, perhaps, with a superior knowledge of the true nature and end of Government. Their integrity and their attachment to the constitution may be relied on with equal confidence. But the novelty of their present situation, the difficulties and disadvantages of their controversy with the Crown, the repeated rejection of a National Petition by their own Representatives, may well produce a pause of astonishment. In this anxious interval of suspense and gradual recollection, it behoves the Agents of the People thoroughly to explore the ground before them; to inquire from what causes their first effort has been defeated, and to consider by what means the obstacles to their final success may be best removed, or most happily surmounted.

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In this early stage of the contest, the people seem to have been foiled, not so much by the strength of their opponents, as from their own inexperience and disunion. The alliance between the Crown and a dependent Parliament, however unnatural it may appear on the principles of the constitution, is yet too strongly cemented by mutual benefits to be dissolved by vague and desultory efforts; by Petitions eagerly adopted by the nation, but irresolutely supported, and, at last, abandoned with pusillanimity, on a second or a third repulse. With the people there is an undoubted superiority of numbers;—but in many districts, the popular Assemblies, partly from improvidence, partly from a candid expectation of redress by Parliament, neglected to make those necessary arrangements, without which they could neither co-operate with other petitioning bodies, nor give a continued support to their petitions: and thus acting without steadiness, without concert, and uniformity of plan, they have been baffled by the art and activity, the union and regularity of discipline, of the Mercenaries of the Crown.

It is by the weight of a General Association, in support of some rational and specific proposal of redress, the body of the people must regain their lost influence over their Trustees. That measure alone can collect and consolidate their force, and give permanence and systematical union to their opposition. Experience has already shewn
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upon a more limited scale, that Association is a *practicable measure*; and that it is a measure of *unquestionable legality* appears from the spirit of our laws; from the express right to present petitions to Parliament, which involves the right to join in any peaceful mode for the more effectual support of those petitions; and from the acquiescence and tacit confession of the adverse party themselves. The application of this inherent power of the people may have been suspended hitherto, by the real or supposed fidelity of Parliament. But when can Associations for obtaining a just attention to the complaints of the nation be necessary, if not, when Parliament itself admits that alarming abuses do actually exist, and yet refuses to correct them? When that Assembly, in a moment of repentance, confesses the over-ruling influence of the Crown, and seems to invite the people, by a strenuous exertion of their constitutional powers, to remove those shackles from which it wants the virtue to disengage itself.

Under such a perversion of the end for which Parliament was instituted, it would be slavish timidity to acquiesce and submit. On the other hand, to meditate schemes of violence and forcible resistance, would be fool-hardy rashness and impetuosity: it would even be unpardonable folly not to discourage seriously such ill-advised attempts. But they who are friends to the peace and to the liberty of their country, may safely
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steer a middle course between those fatal extremes. By the timely adoption of a legal and constitutional Association, the nation may be preserved from the hazards and calamities of civil war, and from the more lasting and intolerable miseries of arbitrary government.

To persons of a mild and cautious character of virtue, the propriety of this mode of opposition may perhaps appear in some degree questionable. They see, not without concern for the Constitution, its strong and apparent tendency to destruction; but they distrust that eagerness of zeal, and that more hardy disposition to serve the public, which prompt men of warmer but perhaps less amiable dispositions, to stand forth in the hour of danger. By the adherents of corruption these suspicions are cherished by every artifice of misrepresentation; and if the end proposed by the people be just and necessary, if the means hitherto employed be unexceptionably lawful, future designs are but too successfully imputed to them, which every wise and honest man must disapprove. Hence the long neutrality of many liberal and worthy men! Sunk in a state of inefficient repose, they slumber in the midst of perils; and under the specious name of moderation, cover even from themselves their langour and inactivity. On this large and important class of men the rectitude of Opposition to a corrupt system of Government, may fail for a time to make a sufficient impression; but at last dire necessity, and the approach
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of unavoidable distress, must awake them from their dream of security.

At that moment, when the alarm of danger rouses even the indolent; when men of a mild and unenterprising temper are ready to associate in the common defence; then it is devoutly to be hoped, THE FRIENDS OF THEIR COUNTRY will have adjusted their disputes; and having settled their plan of public Reformation with prudence, will be prepared to support it with unanimity. Then it will behove the opponents of the undue influence of the Crown to unite their legal exertions, and to pour on, in one unbroken current, against the corruptions of our Government: For that moment will be decisive of our fate. If the Collective Body be then misled or divided in the pursuit of separate or improper objects, their pacific efforts must be wasted once more in unconnected and unavailing struggles. And in that case, it is easy to foresee, that no future attempts to restore the Constitution by legal means, can have any rational hope or prospect of success.

Among the active opponents of the undue influence of the Crown, the advocates for the oeconomical Reformation *alone*, compose a numerous, and in rank and figure, the most distinguished class. To recommend *their palliative plan*, they display the mischiefs of innovation, and treat propositions for the melioration of Parliament as specious, but as impracticable projects.

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In their conception, the improvement of the popular Representation by any of those alterations which other reformers have proposed, is a speculative advantage almost impossible to be attained; and a shorter duration of Parliament is not only undesirable, but positively evil. Instead of attempting to correct the internal disposition of Parliament to admit temptation, they would content themselves with reducing that ostensible fund of corruption, which is externally applied with such fatal success. This, they contend, was the object of reformation which lately formed the true centre of union of the English people; in pursuit of which exhortations to unanimity would have been altogether superfluous and unnecessary. And they observe, not without a mixture of severity, that if the nation had not been misled by wild and visionary schemes, their discontents would have been soon appeased by the satisfactory redress of those grievances which had been the subject of their unanimous complaint.

It must be confessed, the ground on which the people *commenced* their opposition, was chosen with propriety. They felt the hardships of an expensive war; they saw glaring abuses in the management of the public purse; and the request for the correction of those abuses was founded on principles which the Friend to Liberty must approve, and which even the advocate for war could not contradict. But if that patronage

patronage which forms the visible influence of the Crown had been abridged in the most indefensible instances, *without a radical Reformation of Parliament*, the practice of corruption would still have been carried on to as great an extent as ever, only perhaps in a more dangerous and degrading mode. The means of seduction are in the hands of Ministers, to be applied at their discretion; and self-preservation would have taught them the proper application of those means. Who can suppose, *loans of money* would not have been contracted on terms still more grossly disadvantageous to the nation; and the loss of sinecure places and unmerited pensions would not have been compensated by shares of *beneficial subscriptions*, in an adequate proportion? or, if the Minister had chosen to vary his mode of gratification, what could have hindered the immediate increase of the *Secret Service Money*? or the augmentation of the *Royal Debts*, incurred to any amount which might be necessary, and sure to be discharged, without examination, by a grateful Parliament?

When a Senate, chiefly nominated by venal or dependent Electors, has received the taint of corruption, it wants that corrective principle which might throw off the infection, and restore its original purity—the controul of honest and uninfluenced Constituents. In such an Assembly, acceptance frequently repeated wears off the sensations of shame and remorse; the guilty

habit of receiving gradually creates a demand that must be satisfied; and thus CORRUPTION becomes at last the avowed principle of Government. In this stage of political depravity, a Parliament accustomed to prostitution may be induced to embrace the most pernicious measures of a bad but prodigal Administration, with as much warmth, as it would reject the best and wisest plans of that honest Statesman who should scorn the support of pecuniary influence. This is the consummation of a corrupt system of Government, which evidently contains the seeds of dissolution. Ruin is its natural tendency, and must be its certain consequence, unless by an amended Representation in Parliament, the due controul of the Constitution be restored to the Body of the People.

Events had almost verified the truth of this speculation, when the increasing influence of the Crown alarmed the fears and excited the opposition of the country. At that moment, *without previous concert or communication*, a PLAN for the better security of the independence of Parliament, &c. was announced in the House of Commons. The views of that Bill were nearly coincident with those by which the people meant to regulate their proposed Petition; and it is acknowledged with due respect to its celebrated Author, that it was happily calculated to facilitate the wishes *then* expressed by the public. It hardly could be expected that a Senator yet uncertain

certain of the popular support, however distinguished by zeal and abilities, should offer a more extensive Plan of Redress. But when the people, distrusting their Representatives, sought protection, against the over-bearing influence of the Crown, in legal Association, and in the reformation of Parliament, it was then as little to be expected that the popular Agents should stop short, and recommend, as the object of union, that oeconomical system which is certainly inadequate to the efforts and expectations of the Collective Body. That conduct would have been a contradiction to the *first intimation* of their purpose, and to all their subsequent proceedings; it would have been treachery to themselves, and to those by whom they were appointed to act; and it would have forfeited their claim to any share of the public confidence, as disinterested and independent men. Misrepresentation, in language alike injurious to the Leaders of Opposition, and to the popular Agents, would have irrecoverably blasted the Public Cause, as a device cunningly contrived by disappointed Statesmen, and their factious adherents. And thus, in pursuit of unanimity on *that ground*, distrust and jealousy would have been still more widely spread, and the Associations of the people, instead of being more closely cemented, would have been divided and broken up by an irreparable breach.

Men conversant in the business of Parliament may have regretted that a more cautious policy did not restrain the zeal of the Associations to the correction of *official abuses*; and the Associations in their turn may have lamented that more vigorous counsels did not determine their Parliamentary friends to adopt those *primary objects* of the popular plan, which alone can give efficacy or stability to the oeconomic Reformation. These are the unavoidable differences, not the faults, of public men, acting with integrity, but *without mutual intelligence* in circumstances which are in a great measure new to the most extensive observation. But since late experience has still more clearly proved the utter degeneracy of Parliament, and consequently the distrust of the people has been increased and confirmed, a more effectual reformation may now appear evidently necessary even to the former friends of palliative measures. And since a divided opposition to the Crown cannot accomplish a due reduction of its alarming power; and no considerable body of the people can ever be induced to unite in a steady defence of the common liberties, *but on the ground of Parliamentary Reformation*; it surely may be hoped from the virtue and public spirit of those honoured persons that their Coalition with the people *on that ground* is not a distant event.

It is not surprising that even among the declared friends to a Reformation of Parliament,

a considerable variation of sentiment should be found, and different systems of constitutional improvement should appear to different minds to deserve the preference; for on this or on any subject, who can expect an exact coincidence of judgment, in such a multitude of independent men?

That the representation of the people is extremely inadequate; that the septennial duration of Parliament is a dangerous and unwarrantable innovation; that corruption cannot be restrained; that our liberties cannot be secured but by the correction of those gross abuses:—these are propositions in which there is a most unanimous agreement. But whether the people should attempt to restore annual Parliaments; to extend the right of suffrage universally; and to establish a perfect equality of representation; or, whether it does not behove them rather to confine their efforts to the accomplishment of a more limited plan; to shorten the duration of Parliaments to a term not exceeding three years, and to reinforce the sound part of our representation by the addition of one hundred Members to the counties and the metropolis: These are questions which for some time were the subject of frequent discussion and much anxious deliberation; but not more than their importance to the public well deserved.

On behalf of the more extensive plan, much was urged on the true principles of Government

with indefatigable zeal; and the considerations which could be drawn from the natural rights of Men and the ancient privileges of Englishmen were presented in every form of argument, with equal industry and ability. It is indisputably true, that *annual elections* of Parliament were from the earliest times the practice of our forefathers: And frequency of election in a state of Representation *not essentially defective*, would tend strongly to maintain a due connection between the Constituent Body and their Trustees; it would diffuse a more general knowledge of the importance of that right; and the attachment to our happy Constitution would be more sincere and general, as its privileges were more extended and better understood. That mankind are naturally equal, is also a proposition which cannot be denied; and although wherever Society is established, the introduction of inequality in some respects, is unavoidable, yet every humane and equitable mind must disapprove invidious exclusions, by which that inequality is unnecessarily increased. The right of suffrage, though not universally, was more extensively enjoyed by our ancestors before the reign of Henry VI. than in the succeeding period: And if the manners and prejudices of the present age could admit *the restoration of that privilege* in its fullest extent, with an *annual choice of Representatives*, the advocates for the more moderate plan would rejoice at the change.

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The diversity of sentiment, therefore, which has in some measure retarded the union of the people, arose, not from a difference of political principles; for in them there is an entire agreement, but solely from considerations of a prudential nature. The questions in debate have been, not, whether those doctrines be maintainable in argument, for it is admitted they are; but whether it be probable in the present state of the nation, that those doctrines in their full extent, are reducible to practice?—And if it be highly improbable, that a reformation on that extensive plan could be carried into execution, whether it be not expedient that the people wave somewhat of their justifiable claims, and content themselves with that mode of redress which is *less complete in theory*, but which appears *more easily attainable* by peaceful means, and when attained, *fully adequate* to the purpose of their opposition?

On the one hand it was observed, that an army, as dangerous to the Constitution by the weight of influence as by its military prowess, is now become an established augmentation of the Royal Power; that an immense national debt, with its concomitant train of taxes, contracts, subscriptions, creates another abundant source of influence unknown to our ancestors; that a large accession of patronage has accrued to the Crown from the East Indian territories,
and

and the other numerous settlements of the British Empire ; that Parliament itself, seduced by those multiplied attractions, has become but too visibly dependent on the Crown ; that if this great aggregate of power should receive any material augmentation, it would be impossible by any union which could be formed, to recover the balance of the Constitution ; and consequently, although this ought not to intimidate but rather to excite the people instantly to concert the lawful means of that recovery, yet since the power to be opposed is truly formidable, and a defeat would be fatal to all succeeding generations, that it behoves them to proceed with caution equal to their fortitude. It was farther observed, that while the adherents of corruption would alike brand with the odious name of *innovations*, the improvements held out by each of the popular plans, however authorised they may be by former example, or justified by reason and the necessity of reformation, *the more extensive system* proposing an abolition of all our present election-franchises, and a distribution of those franchises anew in a different proportion, would probably appear injurious also to a multitude of electors, who yet would zealously support *the more moderate plan* for restoring the Constitution ; that this total departure from the present establishment of the Lower House of Parliament, even where private interest was not materially affected, would alienate

ate many by the magnitude of the operation, and more perhaps by its contrariety to the manners of the age; that it would offend the pride of the wealthy; excite the fears of the moderate; and shock the prejudices of men unaccustomed to political speculation; and consequently that to contend with the Crown on this disadvantageous ground, would be to expose the liberties of the nation to almost certain ruin, by struggling to communicate the election-franchise to persons who too seldom know the value of it, or express a wish to obtain it.

On the other hand it was considered, that although *the more moderate plan* would enlarge the House of Commons, yet it would leave the present fabric untouched; would preserve the franchises of the whole mass of electors undiminished; and in every respect would be less remote from the habits and practice of the age.—That by the addition of at least one hundred Members to the representation of the counties and the metropolis, their inferiority to the boroughs would be, in a great measure, redressed, and the advantage of those electors who constitute the bulk of the nation would be promoted without injury, and with little sensible inconvenience to any other class of constituents; that although annual Parliaments certainly were not excluded by the more limited proposal, yet in fact its immediate aim was the repeal of the septennial Bill; which being confessedly a temporary expedient, utterly repugnant

repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution, however excusable from the necessity of those times, would probably be now obtained with less difficulty than annual Parliaments; and might properly be considered as the best preparatory measure to their acquisition, and consequently that in all these respects the preference, in the view of feasibility, was evidently due to the more limited plan.

In regard of efficacy, *the more extensive scheme* might indeed claim the priority of choice, if, under the present circumstances of the nation, the establishment of it could be accomplished.—But what is the superior efficacy of an impracticable system? The praise, and perhaps the wish, of the rational patriot, but not the end of his political labours; for they will ever be directed to that best and most beneficial plan, which, in given circumstances, can be attained. It is the just complaint of the nation, that a corrupt majority of Burgesses may be gained to support the most pernicious measures against the sense of the incorrupt part of the Legislature, and the wishes of the public; with this aggravation of the evil, that the possibility of relief by popular interference is protracted by a septennial duration of Parliament. To *these fundamental abuses* the repeal of the septennial Bill, and the addition of one hundred Members to the counties, &c. as a balance to the boroughs, would be a *substantial correction*. Under this amended representation,
 purged

purged from every visible taint of undue influence, and subject to the more frequent controul of the nation by elections at an interval never exceeding three years, the whole system of corruption would be overturned, and the Constitution would acquire a degree of permanent security, which it never attained in any preceding period.

By considerations like these, the people were induced to frame their Associations on this more limited ground ; and, as it then seemed reasonable to conclude, so recent experience has now most manifestly proved that their plan was not too narrow for the views and expectations of their countrymen. With some exceptions, of no great moment, these principles have been adopted or improved by every Associated Body, and confirmed by a General Deputation from the respective Committees. These principles have also received the declared approbation of Senators in each House, whose wisdom, integrity, and public spirit, are at once the honour and reproach of those Assemblies.

A bill on *the more enlarged plan* was indeed offered to the Lords by a Nobleman of the first rank and reputation* ; and the motion was recorded on their journal as a solemn recognition of those principles. But no Association has been formed on that ground, because in the popular apprehension

* His Grace the Duke of Richmond.

apprehension even that weighty recommendation could not compensate the great and perhaps insurmountable difficulties of the measure. But when the people had thus decisively given their preference to *the more limited plan*, their noble advocate, far from pressing them with the pertinacity of disputation to reconsider and accept his favoured system, generously laboured in concert with an illustrious friend† to accomplish a general coalition on the ground of their Association. This was the wisdom of judicious Statesmen—this was the magnanimity of true patriots. Their virtuous, though hitherto unavailing efforts will be remembered with lasting gratitude and veneration; and in their zealous assistance on every future emergency, the trust and confidence of the nation will be reposed.

The Committee of Association for the County of York have once more presumed thus freely to communicate to their fellow-electors their sentiments on *the decline of the Constitution*, and *the means of its restoration*. From this survey of the various plans of reformation which have been offered to the people, their choice seems wisely to have been fixed on that system in which *efficacy* and *practicability* are most advantageously combined; and in the judgment of this Committee, if that SUBSTANTIAL REDRESS cannot be obtained, the formalities of
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† The Right Honourable the Earl of Shelburne.

an Upper and a Lower Assembly may still be continued, but the liberty of Britain must soon be no more. When the nation has lost the ordinary controul of the Constitution over the Representative Body; when, notwithstanding their repeated complaints, alarming abuses are protected and increased, and measures destructive to the common weal are supported and pushed on by that Assembly, the necessity for *some popular interference, in a less ordinary way*, becomes apparent and incontestible. To rectify a disordered Legislature must indeed be a work of the greatest toil and difficulty; but there is yet in the independent part of the community a fund of vigour adequate to the task; and the ancient spirit of the Constitution still affords unexhausted resources to the people, for a lawful, orderly, and effectual interposition. Peaceful Association is the lawful mode adopted by this Committee, in concert with many of their countrymen; and, by a steady prosecution of the *more moderate plan for the reformation of Parliament in this mode*, they still trust the Constituent Body may regain its ascendant over the Representative Assembly. Far, therefore, from wishing to promote confusion, or to prompt their fellow-citizens to deeds of violence and desperation, they exhort them, with conscientious sincerity, to confine their efforts within the bounds of legality. But within those limits they exhort them, with equal earnestness,

ness, resolutely to oppose that system of corruption which is alike the bane of national morality, and the ruin of public liberty.

With these views the Committee of Yorkshire first embarked in this cause; in strict conformity with them they have hitherto proceeded, and are determined to regulate their whole political deportment. *They have been menaced by High Authority; they have been defamed by Reverend Calumny;* but conscious of the purity of their intentions, certain of the legality of their conduct, they cheerfully commit their reputation to the justice of their countrymen, **AND THEIR PERSONAL SAFETY TO THE PROTECTION OF THOSE LAWS WHICH CANNOT BE INFRINGED, WITHOUT A DIRECT ASSUMPTION OF DESPOTIC POWER.**

Paper XVII.

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Paper XVII.

*A State of the Associated Counties, &c. and the
Objects of their respective Affociations.**

Yorkshire,

On the three following propositions, viz. In support of the oeconomical Petition.—

2. Of a Bill for the addition of at least one hundred county Members.—3. Of a Bill for shortening the duration of Parliament to a term not exceeding three years.

Essex,

On the same propositions.

Somersetshire,

Ditto.

Surrey,

Ditto.

Buckinghamshire,

Ditto.

Devonshire,

Ditto.

Middlesex,

Ditto.

City of London,

Ditto Committee now dissolved

Hertfordshire,

On the first proposition.—Resolve in favour of the second and third.

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Dorsetshire,

* This State is supposed to be exact; but it is possible that some omissions or unintentional mistakes may have happened in it. It was published soon after the Meeting of the Committee of Association of the county of York, on the 17th of October, 1781.

Dorsetshire,

On the first proposition.—Instruct their Members on the second and third.

Westminster,

On the first and second propositions, and generally in favour of shortening the duration of Parliament.

The under-mentioned Counties, although not actually associated, have adopted the following measures in favour of the objects of the Yorkshire Association, at their respective Public Meetings :

Huntingdonshire,

Resolve in favour of an equal Representation.

Gloucestershire,

Resolve in favour of short Parliaments, and an equal Representation.

Suffex,

Resolve in favour of the economical Reform, short Parliaments, and an equal Representation. Committee authorised to draw up a Form of Association, if judged necessary.

Kent,

Resolve in favour of the three propositions of the Yorkshire Association.

Bedfordshire,

Resolve in favour of the third proposition of the Yorkshire Association.—Committee authorised

thorised to draw up a Form of Association, if judged necessary.
Berkshire, Resolve in favour of the first and third propositions in Yorkshire and of an equal Representation.

Petitioning Bodies who sent Delegates to the General Deputation held in London in 1780.

Counties of York, Surry, Middlesex, Suffex, Gloucester, Hertford, Kent, Huntingdon, Dorset, Bucks, Chester, Devon, Essex, Somerset, Hants, Northampton; Cities of London, Westminster, and Gloucester; and the towns of Newcastle, and Nottingham.

Affiliated Bodies who sent Delegates to the General Deputation held in London in 1781.

Counties of Middlesex, Hertford, Devon, Surry, Kent, Huntingdon, Nottingham, York, Essex, and the Cities of London and Westminster.

NUMBER VII.

Paper I.

*Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies,
appointed by the several Petitioning or Affoci-
ated Bodies in the Kingdom, for carrying into
execution the declared purposes of the several
Meetings, by whom they were deputed; held at
the New Common Council-Chamber, Guild-
Hall, London, on the 3d day of March, 1781.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. Wyvill	Yorkshire	Lord Visc. Mahon	Kent
Mr. Shore		Mr. Charles Robinson	
Sir James Norcliffe		Rev. Edm. Marshall	
Sir F. Vincent		Rev. Dr. Rycroft	
Mr. Budgen	Surrey	Mr. Chichester	Devon- shire
Mr. Trecothick		Mr. Hamlyn	
Mr. Nicholls		Mr. B. Crosby	
Mr. Day		Mr. Wilkes	
Mr. Jennings	Herts	Mr. Sawbridge	Alder men
Mr. Baker		Mr. R. Holder	
Dr. Jebb		Mr. S. Thorp	
Mr. Townsend		Mr. J. Sharp	
Rev. Robt. Bromley	Middle- sex	An. F. Kemp	Com- mon- ers
Mr. Bellas		Hon. C. J. Fox	
Sir Robert Smith		Hon. R. Fitzpatrick	
Mr. R. M. T. Chiffwell		Lieut. Gen. Burgoyne	
Mr. Baker	Essex	Mr. Brett	Westmin ster
Mr. Brand Hollis		Mr. Sheridan	
Mr. Redman		Mr. Scott	
		Mr. John Churchill	

Resolved, That the Rev. C. Wyvill be Chairman of this Meeting.

Resolved, That the votes of this Assembly be taken by Deputation.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be returned to the Common Council of the city of London, for the distinguished favour of the use of the new Common Council-Chamber, to deliberate on the means of carrying into execution the declared purposes of our Meetings.

Resolved unanimously, That application be made to Parliament, during the present sessions, for correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, and for reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown, which ought to be diminished.

Resolved unanimously, That this Assembly will, at their next Meeting, take into consideration the proper mode for carrying the foregoing Resolution into effect.

Resolved, That this Meeting be adjourned till this day se'nnight at twelve o'clock, precisely.

C. WYVILL.

Paper II.

**Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies,
appointed by the several Petitioning and Associ-
ated Bodies, held at the New Common Coun-
cil Chamber, Guild-Hall, London, on the 10th
day of March, 1781.**

PRESENT.

Rev. C. Wyvill		Hon. — Fortescue	
Mr. Shore	Yorkshire	Sir George Yonge	Devon- shire
Sir James Norcliffe		Mr. Dunning	
Sir F. Vincent		Mr. Chichester	
Mr. Budgen	Surrey	Mr. Short	Alder men
Mr. Trecothick		Mr. Hamlyn	
Mr. Nicholls		Mr. Radcliffe	
Mr. Day	Herts	Mr. B. Crosby	City of London
Mr. Jennings		Mr. Wilkes	
Mr. Baker		Mr. Sawbridge	
Mr. Hope Hyde	Hunting- don	Mr. R. Holder	Com- mon- ers
Dr. Jebb		Mr. S. Thorp	
Mr. Phipps		Mr. J. Sharp	
Mr. Townsend	Middlesex	Mr. A. F. Kemp	Westmin- ster
Rev. Robert Bromley		Hon. C. J. Fox	
Mr. Bellas		Earl of Effingham	
Sir Robert Smyth	Essex	Hon. Rich. Fitzpatrick	
Mr. R. M. T. Chifwell		Lieut. Gen. Burgoyne	
Mr. Baker		Mr. Windham	
Mr. Brand Hollis	Kent	Mr. Brett	
Mr. Redman		Mr. Sheridan	
Lord Visc. Mahon		Mr. Scott	
Mr. Robinson		Mr. J. Churchill	
Rev. Edm. Marshall			
Rev. Dr. Rycroft			

Resolved,

Resolved unanimously, That a Petition to the House of Commons will be the proper mode of applying to Parliament for correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, and for reducing the increased and increasing influence of the Crown.

Resolved unanimously, That a Committee be appointed to form and report to this Meeting, on the 17th of March, a Petition equivalent in its prayer to the several Petitions of the people presented to the House of Commons in the last sessions of Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That the Committee consist of one Member from each Deputation, to be chosen by the respective Deputations.

Resolved unanimously, That the Chairman be requested to communicate to the Chairman of the Committees of the several Petitioning counties, cities, and boroughs, in this kingdom, the proceedings of this Meeting.

Resolved, That this Meeting be adjourned till this day se'nnight, at eleven o'clock.

C. WYVILL.

or The Committee appointed in consequence of the second Resolution was,

Rev. C. Wyvill
Mr. Nicholls
Mr. Baker
Dr. Jebb
Mr. Bellas

Mr. Hoffs
Lord Viscount Mahon
Sir George Yonge
Mr. Sawbridge
Mr. Fox

Paper III.

**Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies,
appointed by the several Petitioning or Associ-
ated Bodies, held at the St. Alban's-Tavern,
on the 17th day of March, 1781.**

PRESENT,

Rev. C. Wyvill		Sir R. Smyth, Bart.	
Mr. Shore	Yorkshire	Mr. Chifwell	Essex
Sir James Norcliffe		Mr. Baker	
Sir F. Vincent	Surrey	Mr. Hollis	Westmin- ster
Mr. Budgen		Mr. Redman	
Mr. Nicholls	Hertfordshire	Hon. Col. Fitzpatrick	Westmin- ster
Mr. Jennings		Mr. Sheridan	
Dr. Jebb	Huntingdonshire	General Burgoyne	
Mr. Townsend	Middlesex	Mr. Churchill	
Rev. Rob. Bromley		Mr. Brett	
Mr. Bellas			

A Petition to Parliament having been reported
by the Committee, and read to this Meeting, *

Resolved unanimously, That the Petition which
has now been read be approved by this Meeting.

Resolved unanimously, That the Petition be
engrossed, and laid before this Meeting, for sign-
ing

* The Petition being exactly the same as that contained in the
Report by the Yorkshire Deputies, is therefore omitted.—See
Number VI. Paper VIII. page 334.

ing on Monday the 19th of March, 1781, at twelve o'clock.

Resolved unanimously, That the Chairman, Sir F. Vincent and Sir R. Smyth, be deputed, from this Meeting, to wait on Sir Geo. Savile, to request him to present the Petition to the House of Commons.

Resolved unanimously, That the Chairman, Sir F. Vincent and Sir R. Smyth, be deputed to wait on Mr. Dunning, and to request him to second Sir George Savile.

Adjourned to Monday the 19th.

C. WYVILL.

St. ALBAN'S TAVERN, March 19, 1781.

AT a Meeting of the Deputies, &c. their Petition to Parliament was signed, and the Meeting adjourned to March 24, 1781.

C. WYVILL.

Paper IV.

Paper IV.

**Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies,
appointed by the Federal Petitioning or Affoci-
ated Bodies, held at the St. Alban's Tavern,
on the 24th day of March, 1781.**

PRESENT,

Rev. C. Wyvill		Mr. Chiswell	
Mr. Shore	} Yorkshire	Mr. Baker	} Essex
Sir James Norcliffe		Mr. Hollis	
Sir F. Vincent		Mr. Redman	
Mr. Budgen	} Surrey	Lord Mahon	} Kent
Mr. Nicholls		Rev. Dr. Rycroft	
Mr. Jennings	Hertfordshire	Rev. Edmund Marshall	
Mr. Phipps	} Hunting- donshire	Ld Ed. Bentinck	} Nottinghamshire
Dr. Jebb		Colonel Fitzpatrick	
Mr. Lawrence	} Middlesex	Mr. Sheridan	} Westmin- ster
Rev. Rob. Bromley		General Burgoyne	
Mr. Bells		Mr. Churchill	
		Mr. Brett	

The Chairman having informed the Meeting that,

Sir George Savile conceives that the Petition from certain gentlemen of the counties of York, Essex, Surrey, Middlesex, &c. is to be by him presented to the House of Commons, from those gentlemen, as Freeholders of the said counties, who do not in this instance act as Deputies, but
who

who petition, in the usual Parliamentary form, on behalf of themselves and others, Freeholders of their respective counties, who joined with the said Petitioners in the former Petitions to Parliament.

It was resolved unanimously, That Sir Geo. Savile hath perfectly understood the sense in which the said Petition was drawn up and is meant to be presented to Parliament.

Resolved, That the Parliamentary Representation of this kingdom is extremely inadequate.

Resolved, That extensive public evils have been produced by the gross inadequacy in the Representation of the People in Parliament.

Resolved, That the addition of at least one hundred Members to the House of Commons, to be chosen in a due proportion in the different counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain, would be a measure tending strongly to correct that gross inadequacy and the extensive public evils arising from it.

Adjourned to March 31, 1781.

C. WYVILL.

Paper V.

Paper V.

*Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies,
appointed by the several Petitioning or Associ-
ated Bodies, held at the St. Alban's Tavern,
on the 31st day of March, 1781.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. Wyvill	}	Yorkshire	Lord Mahon	}	Kent
Mr. Shore			Dr. Rycroft		
Sir James Norcliffe	}	Surrey	Rev. Edmund Marshall	}	Devon- shire
Sir F. Vincent			Mr. Chichester		
Mr. Trecothick	}	Middlesex	Mr. Hamlyn	}	Huntingdonshire
Mr. Nicholls			Dr. Jebb		
Mr. Townsend	}	Middlesex	Mr. Hollis	}	Essex
Rev. Robert Bromley			Mr. Chiswell		
			Col. Fitzpatrick		Westminster

A motion having been made and seconded respecting the disfranchisement of Parliamentary boroughs, upon an adequate compensation being made to the satisfaction of the proprietors thereof, and at their option and not otherwise; upon due and mature deliberation, the Meeting being not disposed to come to any determination on the subject, the proposition was withdrawn with the consent of the Meeting.

Adjourned to April 7, 1781.

C. WYVILL.

Paper VI.

Paper VI.

*Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies,
appointed by the several Petitioning or Affoci-
ated Bodies, held at the St. Alban's Tavern,
on the 7th day of April, 1781.*

PRESENT,

Rev. C. Wyvill	}	Sir F. Vincent	}	Surrey
Mr. Shore		Mr. Trecothick		
Sir James Norcliffe	}	Mr. Nicholls	}	
Lord Mahon		Mr. Budgen		Herts
Dr. Rycroft	}	Mr. Jennings	}	
Mr. Marshall		Rev. Rob. Bromley		Middlesex
Sir R. Smyth	}	Mr. Townsend	}	
Mr. Hollis		Mr. Bellas		Westminster
Mr. Chifwell	}	Col: Fitzpatrick	}	
Dr. Jebb		Lord E. Bentinck		Nottinghamshire
Mr. Chichester		Devonshire		

Resolved, That the Bill enacting the septennial duration of Parliaments, (however expedient it might have been rendered by the circumstances of the times) was a violation of the rights of the people, by which the Constitutional connexion between the Constituent Body and their Representatives has been impaired, and Parliament has been exposed to great and unconstitutional influence.

Resolved, That when by the peaceful and legal efforts of the people, a more frugal management

ment of the public purse, and a more adequate Representation in Parliament, shall have been obtained, the repeal of the septennial Bill would form a strong barrier against the inroads of Parliamentary corruption, and the alarming influence of the Crown.

Adjourned to April 21.

C. WYVILL.

Paper VII.

Proceedings at a Second Meeting of Deputies, appointed by the several Petitioning or Associated Bodies, held at the St. Alban's Tavern, on the 21st day of April, 1781.

PRESENT,

Rev. C. Wyvill	}	Rev. Rob. Bromley	Middlesex	
Mr. Shore		Mr. Hollis	} Essex	
Sir James Norcliffe		Mr. Redman		
Mr. Trecothick		Surrey	Lord Mahon	} Kent
Mr. Jennings		Hertfordshire	Rev. Dr. Rycroft	
Dr. Jebb	Huntingdonshire	Col. Fitzpatrick	Westminster	

Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, the Chairman of this Meeting.

Resolved,

Resolved, That one thousand copies of the Resolutions of this Meeting be printed in the manner they were last year; and that the Resolutions thereof be communicated to the respective Committees.

Resolved, That this Meeting be dissolved.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

✱ The several Resolutions respecting the Representation of the people, and shortening the duration of Parliaments, in the 4th and 6th Papers of this Number, were objected to, on the ground of the inexpediency of advancing these propositions at this time; and the previous questions being put on each motion for those Resolutions, the said previous questions passed in the negative.

NUMBER VIII.

NUMBER VIII.

Paper I.

*Resolutions at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee
of Affociation of the County of York, on the
14th of December, 1781.*

PRESENT,

The Rev. WILLIAM MASON, Chairman.	
Mr. Croft	Rev. Luke Yarker
Rev. Robert Croft	Mr. Weddell

Resolved, That the following letter be sent
by the Chairman to the Rev. C. Wyvill.

Rev. Sir,

THE Sub-Committee have met
this day to consider of what ought to be done
in regard of the present situation of public affairs;
but as Wednesday last was the day fixed for the
consideration of the Supply, and some material
information may arise from thence, they have
adjourned their Meeting to Tuesday morning
next, that they may be furnished with the result
of that debate; and in the mean time they re-
quest

quest you would favour them with a letter, signifying your sentiments upon the measures which ought to be pursued. Mr. Duncombe is expected at Copgrove on Sunday. The Sub-Committee with very much for your attendance on Tuesday, but if that should be inconvenient, they rely on hearing from you by return of the post, &c.

Resolved, That the following letter be sent by the Chairman to H. Duncombe, Esq.

Sir,

THE Sub-Committee of Association, who met to-day, have adjourned themselves to Tuesday morning next, in order that they may be apprised of the result of the business of Wednesday last, before they resolve on any particular step relative to the present situation of public affairs. They will be very glad to have you with them at their next Meeting, but if you cannot conveniently attend, they beg you will write to them, with particulars of the proceedings of Wednesday, and your own sentiments upon what ought to be done. I am, &c.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Tuesday next, the 15th inst. at twelve o'clock.

W. MASON,
Chairman for the day.

Paper II.

Letter from the Rev. C. WYVILL to the Rev.
WILLIAM MASON.

BURTON-HALL, Dec. 16, 1781.

Dear Sir,

THIS morning I received the favour of your letter of the 14th of December; in which, as Chairman of the Sub-Committee for that day, you desire me "to communicate my sentiments upon the measures which ought to be pursued" on the present emergency. I am truly sensible of the honour done me by the Sub-Committee, and I consider myself bound to declare my opinion frankly, fully, and without reserve, as the only proper return to so great a mark of their confidence.

I profess, the Remonstrance to the Throne which has been lately adopted in the Metropolis, appears to me a hasty and injudicious measure, and totally unworthy to be followed by the county of York. The drift and direct tendency of it seems plainly to be this, viz.—To effect a change of Ministers, without any engagement, or security obtained for the people, on the part of those who may succeed, that they will give their consent and utmost support, when in
office,

office, to the establishment of a substantial Reformation of Parliament. Without that necessary stipulation, the concurrence of Yorkshire, in the City-Remonstrance, might assist the Opposition to turn out the present Ministers, but it would in effect ruin their Association, and throw the chance of obtaining a redress of the great and fundamental grievance of our country to an irrecoverable distance. It is, therefore, my clear and decided opinion, that the Committee ought not to call the county of York, for the simple purpose of adopting that Remonstrance. But if it were understood that the Yorkshire Noblemen, &c. who are in opposition to Government, would engage to support the objects of the Association, and would commit themselves accordingly at a County Meeting, by a direct concurrence in measures for that purpose; in that case, A COUNTY Meeting would seem highly proper to be called; and men who so freely engaged to do the business of the public, could hardly be supported by it with too much warmth within the bounds of legality.

If these sentiments are approved by the gentlemen of the Sub-Committee, they will probably see little difficulty in deciding the question of prudence; whether it be not advisable to defer, for a week or fortnight, the calling of a Meeting of the Committee, in order that time may be afforded to the Noble Persons above alluded to, to explain their intentions to the Committee,

or to the public in any other mode which they may think proper.

After having waited that time for such explanation of their intentions, if the Sub-Committee shall then see no reason to think those Noble Persons will engage to support any county measure, by which the objects of the Association, and the discontinuance of the American war, may be conjunctly promoted, it will be matter of serious deliberation whether it will be advisable for the Committee to call the county together for that joint purpose, or to defer that measure. How far such a step may be advisable, in that situation, is a question not easy to be determined at present; but much light may possibly be thrown upon it by information obtained before that time.

On the whole, my earnest wish is, that the gentlemen of the Sub-Committee would not yet call the Committee together; and if they approve the postponing of that call for ten days or a fortnight, I will endeavour to attend a Meeting of the Sub-Committee at that time, previous to any final determination of the question, whether the Committee ought to be convened on the present emergency or not.

I conceive the whole success of the Association to depend on the caution and firmness of our conduct on this trying occasion. I trust, therefore, it will not be necessary to make any apology for having, under a sense of duty to the

the public, and in the openness and sincerity of my heart, so freely declared my sentiments to the Sub-Committee. But I beg you will assure the gentlemen, who may be assembled at the York Tavern on Tuesday, that I shall feel the most lively satisfaction if these sentiments are fortunately conformable to those which have been already conceived by yourself, and by the other Members of the Sub-Committee.

I am, with great respect,

Dear Sir, very truly your's,

G. WYVILL.

Paper III.

Resolution at a Meeting of the Sub-Committee of Association of the County of York, on the 18th of December, 1781.

PRESENT,

Mr. CROFT, Chairman.

Rev. William Mason
Mr. St. Quintin
Rev. Robert Croft
Mr. Barlow

Rev. Luke Yarker
Mr. Withers
Mr. Weddell

Read the Rev. Mr. Wyvill's answer to the Chairman's letter of the 14th instant.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn subject to a call by the Clerk at the instance of any one Member.

STEP. CROFT, Chairman for the day.

*Paper IV.***Resolutions at a Meeting of the Committee of Association of the County of York, on the 7th of April, 1782.****PRESENT,****Rev. C. WYVILL, Chairman.**

Sir James Norcliffe	Mr. Strickland
Sir R. D. Hildyard	Mr. Childers
Rev. William Mafon	Sir George Strickland
Mr. Morritt	Mr. H. Thompson
Mr. H. Duncombe	Mr. Croft
General Hale	Mr. Booth
Rev. John Robinson	Mr. Hill
Mr. Dring	Rev. L. Yarker
Mr. Duncombe	Mr. Chaloner
Mr. Shore	Rev. John Bourne
Mr. Wilson of Ayton	Mr. Rawson
Mr. Courtney	Mr. Walker
Mr. Pool	Mr. James Milnes, jun.
Mr. Croft, jun.	Mr. Tooker
Mr. P. Milnes	Sir John Coghill
Mr. R. S. Milnes	Mr. Withers
Mr. Hayes	Rev. William Cayley
Mr. Waines	Mr. Place
Mr. Battle	Mr. Shepherd
Mr. Legard	Mr. Wolrich
Mr. Athorpe	Mr. Stansfield
The Dean of York	Mr. St. Quintin
Rev. Robert Croft	Dr. Swainston
Mr. Sykes	Rev. William Dealtry
Rev. John Dixon	Rev. William Dade
Rev. William Comber	Mr. Elbery
Mr. F. Smyth	Mr. Jackson of Normanby
Mr. Weddell	Colonel Thornton
Mr. Yorke	Dr. Spencer, elected this day

Resolved,

Resolved, That Dr. William Spencer of York, be added to this Committee.

Read a letter from Thomas Kyffin, Esq; Chairman of the county of Caernarvon, which the Chairman of this Committee is desired to answer.

The several Resolutions following were unanimously agreed to:

1. That the thanks of this Committee be given to that Independent Majority of the Commons House of Parliament, who, on the 27th day of February last, voted for the question moved by the Right Honourable General Henry Seymour Conway, viz.—“ That it is the opinion of this House, That the further prosecution of offensive war on the Continent of North America, for the purpose of reducing the revolted Colonies to obedience by force, will be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies, tends, under the present circumstances, dangerously to increase the mutual enmity, so fatal to the interests both of Great-Britain and America, and, by preventing an happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the earnest desire graciously expressed by his Majesty, to restore the blessings of public tranquillity;”—and who, by the strenuous and continued exertion of their zeal, against all the arts and machinations of an insidious Administration, having unavoidably brought on their involuntary resignation, have opened to their countrymen the prospect of a speedy, equitable,

and happy reconciliation with their American Brethren.

2. That in consequence of that dismissal of a profuse and dangerous Administration, the powers of Government having been entrusted with the avowed Opponents of Corruption, this Committee doth most fully confide in those honoured persons, as Ministers determined to set the rare example of public frugality, as Patriots active to correct abuses themselves, and friendly to promote every wise and just measure of reformation which may be suggested by others, effectually to secure the Freedom and Independence of Parliament.

3. That this Committee, conceiving the task of Government in the present moment to be arduous beyond the difficulty experienced in any former period, and being anxious to mark their high respect and deference to Ministers who stand voluntarily pledged to the nation for the reduction of the undue influence of the Crown, doth postpone to their next Meeting their resolution to call a General Meeting of the county of York, in order to submit to that great body of Freeholders, the necessity of presenting a Petition to Parliament in the course of the next session, for a redress of that fundamental grievance, the unequal Representation of the People in Parliament.

4. That Mr. Croft, Mr. F. Smyth, the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, Mr. Shore, Sir James Norcliffe, Mr. Withers,

Withers, the Rev. Mr. Mafon, Mr. Morritt, Mr. Dring, and Dr. Swainston, be directed to prepare an abridged Report of the whole proceedings of this Committee, which, if approved at the next Meeting of this Committee, shall be laid before the General Meeting of the county of York; and that they be instructed to state in such report the judgment of this Committee, that unless a melioration of Parliament can be obtained on the principles of the Association, the best official regulations may soon be set aside, the wisest and most virtuous Ministers may soon be displaced, by the prevalence of that corrupt interest now subsisting in the House of Commons, which its defective frame naturally generates, and which has already so nearly effected the ruin of this unhappy country.

That this Committee do adjourn till to-morrow morning at a quarter before ten o'clock.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

YORK.

YORK-TAVERN, April 5, 1782.

At the adjourned Meeting of the Committee of Association.

Resolved, That William Danby, Esq; of Swinton, be added to this Committee.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Sub-Committee immediately to take into their consideration the forming a proper plan, upon legal and constitutional grounds, for preventing bribery and corruption at elections for Members to serve in Parliament; and for detecting and bringing to justice all persons who shall offend against the laws now in being for preventing bribery and corruption at elections: and that they be further desired to be prepared with their Report at the next Meeting of this Committee.

Resolved, That this Committee do adjourn to Thursday the 31st day of October next, subject to an earlier call by the Sub-Committee, or by the Chairman, at the requisition of any five Members.

C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper V.

Paper V.

Letter from THOMAS KYFFIN, Esq; to the Rev.

C. WYVILL.

Sir,

IN pursuance of Mr. Carreg's, our late very respectable High-Sheriff's, call of this county, to consider on and concert measures so as to induce a total Revolution into the present most wretched and diabolical conduct of Ministers; and as far as in us lies, exert all those legal efforts, which may tend to unhinge a plan so fatal to the prosperity of this country, and restore, if not too late, this once flourishing Empire to its former state of affluence and consideration in the balance of Europe; most of the principal gentlemen and yeomanry, adequate to give consequence to the Meeting, attended. Unfortunately the day fixed was the day of the decollation of the First Charles: Some of the Pseudo-Patriots expressed an aversion to business on such a day, as it might be deemed a reflection on the present Monarch; the comparison between the two reigns being striking: Thus in the height of their loyalty, drawing conclusions,

conclusions, little respectful to Majesty. I really cannot say I thought there was so much room for such a display of conscience. For what better mirror can be exhibited for the instruction of Prince and People, than what is recorded in the faithful annals of the Historian? Of course the general sense seemed to be for an adjournment, as those squeamish gentry promised all their assistance should the Meeting be deferred, which was done to the 16th of February.

We met on that day: All the transactions of that day ended in placing me in the chair. The Meeting carried so little weight with it, that another adjournment was the result. I was within these few days informed, that several gentlemen intend presenting a requisition to me, to antedate the adjournment by a fresh call of the county; should it prove so, I shall not, in the least, hesitate in complying with their wishes. The reason I give you this trouble, is to receive your advice what mode it were best to adopt, whether a Remonstrance to the Throne, a Petition to Parliament, (who appear to have recovered some share of their senses) or a Committee of Association. The Minister, in Wednesday's minority, has entirely altered the manner, in my opinion, which we should pursue, in giving efficiency to our resolves; as the Commons House may be cited as a precedent for us to proceed by.

Every

Every Englishman must rejoice at the discomfiture of an Administration which would have disgraced Hell.—Sir, you ought to have your full portion of the thanks of your country, for your early and patriotic interference in Yorkshire. The friends of the people cannot pay too much attention to the gentlemen of that county, and their very respectable Committee. Give me leave to assure you, my earnest and hearty wishes attend you, and may a thorough change be the fruit of your good inclinations.—I am glad Lord Effingham has returned to the country, as he could gain no credit by sitting in an House, where corruption seems to take deeper root than in the Lower House: The pride of peerage, and the unfulfilled honour of nobility, seems to be the lot of a few chosen objects. I received your packet as Chairman of the Denbighshire Committee, but thought it unnecessary to give you any trouble, as I found the minds of the people, in general, very little impressed with an idea that there subsisted such a virtue as the love of one's country. If any thing material should occur, I will, with your leave, send you the most early communication, to testify our joy at the overthrow of that hydra, Corruption, and the defeat of the High Priest, whose altars are overturned. I wish I could add the letter H to alter as his proper insignia.—Though our pious Prince will, I do not doubt,

doubt, introduce him, as a counter-part of the
Minden Hero, into the Upper House.

I am, Sir,

With every possible degree of respect,

Your most obedient

And humble servant,

THO. KYFFIN.

Paper VI.

Letter from the Rev. C. WYVILL to THOMAS
KYFFIN, Esq.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE, near London, April 18, 1782.

Sir,

ON my arrival at York, to
attend the last Meeting of the Committee there,
I received your favour of the 4th of March,
which the Clerk ought to have transmitted im-
mediately to me instead of waiting for my com-
ing down. I should most exceedingly regret his
mistake, if I did not trust that you will have the
goodness to excuse the tardiness of my answer,
imputing this appearance of inattention solely to
the cause which I have here explained.

I now take the earliest opportunity, after my
return

return from Yorkshire, to assure you, Sir, that your letter was read with peculiar satisfaction to the Committee; who are truly sensible of the honour you have done them in consulting them, and wishing to have their opinion on the measures which it might be expedient to propose in Caernarvonshire, if another Meeting of that county should be held; and it is with great pleasure indeed they have observed in the public prints, that the county of Caernarvon has actually met again, and agreed to those very resolutions which the Committee of Yorkshire could have wished to recommend.

From the late change of the Ministry, we may justly expect that every exertion will be made to retrieve the affairs of this country, and to terminate the unfortunate war, in which it has been involved by the late dangerous Administration, with as little disadvantage as possible; and we have also the satisfaction to find that the men now in power have lost no time to promote that essential reform in matters of oeconomy, &c. which in a different situation they declared to be necessary. To embarrass those worthy Ministers, by proposing still farther reformation in the midst of all their present difficulties, and before they have had time to carry their own plans into execution, would be rash and injurious to the public cause. But next winter the same objection, we may presume, cannot exist; and then those independent gentlemen,

tllemen, who wish to secure their country from a renewal of that corrupt system of Government from which we have been so happily delivered, will join, it is most ardently to be wished, in an application to Parliament, while the powers of Government are in favourable hands, to procure a due correction of that inequality in the Representation of the People, which is the true source of all our national grievances. If a proper addition of Representatives can be obtained for the counties, and principal cities, and an adequate disfranchisement of the rotten boroughs can be carried, the independent part of the House of Commons will then have gained such a decisive superiority, as may secure the liberties of the nation for ages yet to come.

With that measure the Committee of Yorkshire will recommend to the General Meeting of their county to begin; meaning also to propose an application to Parliament for a repeal of the septennial bill: and it will be the greatest encouragement to the county of York to persevere in this arduous undertaking, if their Petition shall have the good fortune to receive the approbation and support of the independent gentlemen of Wales; more particularly those of the two respectable counties of Denbigh and Caernarvan; in which you have taken so active and so meritorious a part.

I beg leave to add, Sir, that I feel myself much obliged to you for the very favourable opinion

opinion you are pleased to express of my feeble
endeavours in the same honest cause.

I am, Sir,

With the greatest respect,

Your most faithful

And obedient humble servant,

C. WYVILL.

Paper VII.

Letter from DAVID HARTLEY, Esq; to the Rev.

C. WYVILL.

GOLDEN-SQUARE, March 28, 1782.

Dear Sir,

I PRESUME this will find you
at York, preparing for the Meeting of Thursday
next. I heartily wish you success in all your la-
bours for the public good. Permit me to suggest
one thought to you, which appears to me to be
of great importance *now* :—The General Meet-
ing of March 28, 1780, came to a very wise
Resolve, viz. To establish a Committee for the
purpose of forming some legal and constitutional
plan of preventing bribery at the *then* depending
General Election. By the suddenness of that
dissolution, the time was lost *then*. It may be

D d

considered

considered as an event, not impossible at least, that the new Ministry may dissolve this Parliament at the end of the present Session, that they may have (as it is called) a Parliament of their own. Therefore take the occasion by the forelock, *now*.—*Verbum sapienti*. A standing Committee of the gentlemen of property, in a county against bribery, (like an Association against poachers) would intimidate some, encourage others, and would give the country gentlemen an influence as a Body Corporate, in the boroughs within their respective counties, against adventurers. I think the *effect* would be great. For instance,—That the Committee should write a Letter of Address to any Candidate, who may hereafter stand within the county of York, requesting a declaration, upon honour, that he will not, directly or indirectly, offer or give bribes at any time; besides any persons requested by the Committee to keep watch and ward against bribery, in the service and on the part of the gentlemen of the country, would not be upon the footing with mean and venal informers. No person of honour or conscience would be brow beaten, for transmitting notorious marks of corruption, in any case, to the Committee; for the purpose of investigation, by a grand inquest in each county, constituted of gentlemen of landed property and of the first consideration in the country. These are general Thoughts thrown out for farther consideration, &c. &c.

I drew

I drew up a Paper, upon this subject, about a year and a half ago, when I was at York, in the shape of a supposed Report upon the Resolutions of March 28, 1780. Dr. Burgh and Mr. R. Sykes have each of them a copy. Give me leave to offer it to you, for any purpose that you may think proper, either for the Committee or General Meeting to be received, if they think proper, among their public papers; or to be modified or to be printed; or in short as they may think proper. If it should be referred to the Committee, I beg that my respects may attend it.

I am, dear Sir,
Your much obliged friend,
D. HARTLEY.

Dd.2

Paper VIII.

Paper VIII.

Draught of a proposed Report from the Committee of Association of the County of York, to a General Meeting of that County, in pursuance of the Reference to them by the Meeting held on the 28th of March, 1780, to form a Plan for preventing Bribery at Elections.*

AT an adjourned Meeting of the county of York, held at York on the 28th of March, 1780, the following Resolution, among others, was agreed to, viz.—

Resolved,

THAT it be recommended to the Committee, appointed by this Meeting, to consider of and form, upon legal and constitutional grounds, a proper plan for detecting and bringing to justice all persons who, at the ensuing General Election, shall either give or receive bribes for the election of Members to serve in Parliament; and that such plan, when agreed upon, be communicated to other Associated Bodies.

The Committee have taken the aforefaid resolution into their consideration, and have agreed to the following report thereupon.—

The intended objects of the foregoing resolution

* Written by David Hartley, Esq.

tion are,—either electors having received bribes, or persons having procured themselves to be elected by bribery or any other corrupt practices.

Electors may be divided into two general classes, viz. Electors for the counties, and Electors for cities and boroughs. With regard to the first class, viz. Freeholders being electors for counties, from the nature of the case, they do not lyè under any imputation of bribery; and even if any instance of bribery should accidentally occur in any county election, it could only be personal perhaps for a few individuals; but counties in their aggregate and corporate capacities, are not liable to any imputation of venality. With regard to all the classes of boroughs, viz. Cities, great towns, and lesser boroughs, they are liable not only to the personal and occasional venality of individuals, but likewise to a general and notorious system of venality, in their public and aggregate capacities. Here it is that the universality of this evil obtains as a general national grievance, in defiance of the laws and to the disgrace of the legislature.

It is for the purpose of applying some remedy to this evil, that the Committee consider the reference of the General Meeting of the county of York to have been made to them. They recommend, therefore, that a perpetual standing Committee should be appointed, in each county, for the purpose of detecting and bringing to

justice all corrupt practices on the account of Parliamentary elections.

That such Committee shall be supported, by a general subscription, for the purpose of finding out and procuring evidence of any corrupt practices at elections within the county. That any evidence, so procured, shall be examined, methodised, and digested, by the Committee, as a foundation for prosecution.

The Committee are of opinion, in the next place, that the evidence, when collected by the respective Committees, should be referred by them, by petition, to the House of Commons, requesting that the House take into consideration, and order a public prosecution as for a public crime. Many cases may be produced, of prosecutions against individuals for bribery taking their rise in Parliament, and of their being carried into effect, by enforcing the severe penalties of the law, against such individuals. If the case should amount to a general and notorious venality throughout any town or borough, the examples of Shoreham and Cricklade have drawn out the just line which ought to be followed in similar cases. The Committee are of opinion, that the terror of public prosecutions may be the most probable method of preventing or suppressing the general practice of bribery, especially if vigorously supported, by the activity and exertions of the several counties interested

in

in the real and effectual reformation of the present corrupt system of Parliamentary elections.

There are many statutes, in our books, against bribery and corruption. These statutes are at present almost universally frustrated by crafty evasions. There is a standing order of the House of Commons, that all persons who will question the return of any Member to serve in Parliament, do question the same within fourteen days after the return being brought in. This order, which was originally intended merely to secure the seats of Members of Parliament from vague and vexatious uncertainties, has been perverted, by crafty persons, to the purpose of eluding all the penalties of the laws against bribery and corruption. In consequence of this line of limitation being drawn at the end of fourteen days to the pretensions of any competitor interested to question the return, it is become a general custom, accorded to by a kind of tacit compact between the parties in the covenant of corruption, to delay the understood bargain and completion of the bribe, till the expiration of fourteen days after the purchasing member shall have taken his seat, trusting to this chance for evading the penalties of the law, the foreclosing the pretensions of the only interested and active prosecutor.— By this preconcerted system of venality, the criminal parties elude both prosecution and punishment; for when the former competitor for the seat in Parliament finds himself precluded after

fourteen days from any chance of recovering the object of his particular ambition by entering into a general prosecution for bribery, he remains no further interested in the cause than any other individual in the kingdom ; and so the matter drops from the want of an active prosecutor, or of any interested motive to urge on the prosecution.

The consideration of these circumstances points to an obvious and just remedy to this mode of evading public justice, which is, that the term of fourteen days, which in good reason ought to preclude all other questions upon any return to Parliament, should not be conclusive in the case of bribery, proved on account of the preceding election, though committed after the return, or after the expiration of the fourteen days. This is due, in point of private justice, to any candidate, who might have recovered his seat in Parliament by any proof of bribery on the part of his opponent at the time of the election, the injury having taken real effect against him at the time of the election, notwithstanding the apparent juggle of the date of the crime. As a public example, also, it may contribute effectually to restrain many of the most notorious cases of bribery, by rendering it equally difficult at all times as it is now, before the expiration of the fourteen days, to carry into effect and close the bargain and sale of Parliamentary corruption. The public justice of this principle stands already
admitted

admitted in full force upon the journals of Parliament; for there is an annual standing order of the House of Commons, declaring, without any limitation of time, that if it shall appear that any person hath procured himself to be elected or returned a Member to Parliament, or endeavoured to be so, by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, the House will proceed with the utmost severity against such person. The term of proceeding with the utmost severity against any Member, cannot be interpreted to mean less than expulsion; therefore, even at present, if there were any active prosecutors to bring forward the criminal proof, which in many cases is most notorious and public, any Members might become liable to the utmost severity of the House, notwithstanding the supposed security of fourteen days, against whom proof might be brought, of their having at any time paid to any of their Constituents the mercenary wages of their corruption. It should, therefore, be recommended to the Committees of the several counties above-mentioned, to exert their utmost diligence and activity in detecting and bringing to justice such corrupt practices, to the punishment of the persons elected by corruption, as well as of the venal electors. The Committee are likewise of opinion, that it would be proper to apply to the Members for this county, in conjunction with other county Members, to move an amendment to the annual standing order of the House of Commons,

Commons, respecting the limitation of fourteen days for questioning the returns of Members by a general exception of the cases of bribery, although committed at any time after the return, or after the expiration of the said fourteen days.

The principle of this limitation of fourteen days, in the present case, is totally foreign to the principle of limitations of criminal actions, prescribed in acts of Parliament. In all other criminal cases, the limitation of actions takes place at a certain period after the commission of the offence, whereas it is the limitation itself, in the present case, which prescribes the precise mode and time of committing the offence with impunity. In numberless instances of elections, the completion of the venal bargain, after the expiration of the fourteen days, is public and notorious without any pretence of concealment.

For these reasons, the Committee would recommend to the public consideration, the amendment herein before proposed to the present standing order of the House of Commons, relative to the limitation of fourteen days for questioning returns, admitting no other limitation of the time, in the case of bribery, but such as is reasonable to prescribe in all cases of criminal process, viz. Some reasonable and specified period after the commission of the crime.

These are the propositions which the Committee have to offer to the General Meeting of the county of York, in consequence of the reference,
made

made to them, respecting bribery and corruption at Elections. They are willing to hope, that the active and united exertions of the several counties, in their public capacities, may be equal to the task of making head against that formidable system of corruption, which has got possession in almost every borough in the kingdom. No power, but that of a strong and combined number of men united in the public cause, can be equal to so great an undertaking. If that system of corruption could but for once be driven from its possessory hold, the amendment, proposed in the standing order of limitation of the House of Commons, promises to be an effectual bar at least to that evasion of the law which has hitherto formed the impregnable citadel of corruption. It may reasonably be hoped that the great and respectable boroughs of this kingdom, where public notoriety must be incident to corruption, may by these means be protected or rescued from the contagion.—For the rotten and incurable parts in the Representation of this kingdom, your Committee knows of no remedy—but **EXTIRPATION.**

Paper IX.

*Resolutions at a numerous and respectable Meeting of Members of Parliament, friendly to a Constitutional Reformation of Parliament, and of Members of several Committees of Counties and Cities, held at the Thatched-House Tavern, on the 18th day of May, 1782.**

P R E S E N T,

The Lord Mayor of London, (Sir William Plomer) in the Chair,

Earl of Surrey,
Viscount Mahon,
Henry Duncombe, Esq;
James Martin, Esq;
The Rev. C. Wyvill,
John Cartwright, Esq;
Brafs Crosby, Esq;

The Duke of Richmond,
The Hon. William Pitt,
Sir Cecil Wray,
T. Brand Hollis, Esq;
Dr. John Jebb,
John Wilkes, Esq;
Sir Watkin Lewes, Knt. &c.

Resolved unanimously,

THAT the motion of the Hon. William Pitt, on the 7th instant, for the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the state of the Representation of the People of Great Britain in Parliament, and to report the same to the House, and also what steps it might be proper, in their opinion, to take thereupon, having been defeated by a motion made for the order of the day, it is become indispensibly necessary that application should be

* This Paper, with very little alteration, has been inadvertently reprinted in the Appendix to the third volume. The repetition was not perceived by the Editor till it was too late to correct his mistake.

made

made to Parliament by Petition, from the Collective Body of the People in their respective districts, requesting a substantial Reformation of the Commons House of Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, That this Meeting, considering that a general application by the Collective Body to the Commons House of Parliament cannot be made before the close of the present Sessions, is of opinion, that the sense of the people should be taken, at such times as may be convenient during this summer, in order to lay their several Petitions before Parliament early in the next Sessions, when their proposition for a Parliamentary Reformation (without which neither the liberty of the Nation can be preserved, nor the permanence of a wise and virtuous Administration can be secured) may receive that ample and mature discussion which so momentous a question demands.

SUPPLEMENT

SUPPLEMENT to NUMBER III. containing the
10th and 11th Papers of that Number.

Paper X.

*Report of the Deputies of the Committees of
several Counties, Cities, and Towns, which had
Petitioned Parliament for a Redress of Griev-
ances in 1780.*

AT a Meeting of Deputies from the Counties
of York, Surry, Middlesex, Suffex, Glou-
cester, Hertford, Kent, Huntingdon, Dorset,
Bucks, Chester, Devon, and Essex; from the
Cities of London and Westminster, and Glou-
cester, and the Towns of Newcastle and Not-
tingham, holden at the St. Alban's Tavern,
and afterwards by several adjournments at
the Great-Room in King-Street, St. James's,
on Saturday the 11th, Tuesday the 14th,
Wednesday the 15th, Friday the 17th, Sa-
turday the 18th, and Monday the 20th days
of March, 1780 :

The Rev. Christopher Wyvill, one of the Depu-
ties from the county of York, in the Chair.

Resolved,

THAT the Deputies from the Committees of
the different Petitioning Counties, Cities,
and Towns, shall vote by Deputations, each De-
putation giving one vote.

Read

Read and approved the following

MEMORIAL,
Containing reasons for a Plan of Association,
proposed by the Deputies from the several
Counties, Cities, and Towns, who have peti-
tioned Parliament for a redress of grievances.

IF there ever was a period, in the annals of
this country, for popular jealousy to be awake,
and popular virtue to exert itself, it is the pre-
sent. Other eras have been marked by partial
inroads on the Constitution grasping at parti-
cular prerogatives, and narrowing chiefly the
subordinate branches of civil liberty.

But whatever was their measure, disappoint-
ment and overthrow have generally been their
fate.—That public virtue which hath distin-
guished Englishmen never forsook our ancestors
in the hour of important trial, never left the
arbitrary mind to triumph finally in success.
Their Representatives in the Legislative Body
might be depended on at the National call, and
in that barrier they ever found themselves im-
pregnable.

What is our situation at present? By the opera-
tion of a despotic system, which has continued,
with very little intermission, near nineteen years,
and is now almost compleated by a dangerous
Administration, the very vitals of the Constitu-
tion have received a mortal wound, not this or
that partiality of the reigning mind has been
gratified,

gratified, but the whole capacity of popular freedom has been struck at. We are arrived at the crisis which the wisest of political writers have uniformly marked for the downfall of Britain, when the Legislative Body shall become as corrupt as the executive and dependent upon it.

Let any man look back to the laws which have passed only in the ten last Sessions of Parliament, forming, as it were step by step, a code of Prerogative, which has already brought within its vortex the primary part of Civil, Religious, Commercial, and Military Administration, within the kingdom or its dependencies, not excepting from its vast controul all the branches of the Royal Family, and but too probably the succession of the Crown: Let him look back to these, and then doubt if the Executive Power has not found its way to the corruption of the Legislative. Let him behold a venal majority in the House of Commons, Session after Session, moving obsequious to the nod of the Minister, and giving the Legislative sanction to propositions, not only big with the fate of their country, but often militating against the first principles of the Constitution, and the declared voice of their Constituents; while every effort of reason and argument, urged by an independent few, has only been answered by numbers, dumb to every other reply: and then let him judge how enormous that corruption must be. But let him bring his observation to the immense patronage of the Crown, diffused over this Legislative
Body

Body in the bestowal of offices, and where offices are too few, or not lucrative enough to satiate the corruption of individuals, in ruinous contracts, in profuse pensions, some known, and others studiously concealed: Let these be considered, and the terms above-mentioned, in which the crisis of British Freedom is marked, are indisputably fulfilled, the Legislative Body is as corrupt as the Executive and dependent upon it.

For us then it is reserved to feel ourselves bowed down under that intolerable oppression, which, to a British Mind in any past generation, could appear but as a fearful speculation—The enormous, the compactly-accumulated, the all devouring, Influence of the Crown. By an unhappy war with America, begotten in the first influence of this despotic system, and nursed with a view of giving completion to it, this fatal influence has been armed with more ample means, than ever it enjoyed before, for enslaving Parliament in the private application of no small part of those monies which have far exceeded the supplies of former wars, and have been obtained under the pretext of necessary public service; while the nation itself, in every species of its property, in every department of its commerce, in every description of its people, (those only excepted who have become great on the spoils of the public) hath visibly sunk almost into beggary. Never, surely, did any country experience so sudden a reverse from prosperity to

depression. It took place, it covered us, while we began but to forebode it. The weight of its evils now rests on our heads, in the alarming fall of rents, the decay of manufactures, the accumulation of taxes, the stagnation of all credit, at the same time there is but the probability of worse ensuing after bad: The humble and temperate Petitions of an oppressed people, are answered, if not with insolence, yet hitherto with unfeeling neglect: The Oppressors of the Land are still cherished; nay, rewards and honours keep pace with the accumulation of their misconduct. Men of integrity, on whom the public confidence would rest, are cast out; and amidst all these, we have the mortifying reflection to find that an Administration thus hostile to the people, though possessing ostensibly the responsibility of office, is entrenched, or labours to entrench itself behind the Royal Person covered with prerogatives, which would exempt him from doing wrong.

These are evils which must be redressed, if we would not be stigmatized for slaves to the latest generations.—It is the definition of an Englishman to be jealous of the influence of the Crown; it is the definition of a Member in the British Parliament to check it.—Shall both forfeit for ever? nay, cover in shame the lustre of their proper character! The reproach hath been cast on us all but too long, and chiefly by those who have dealt out the arts of corruption; that it is

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to our own want of public virtue, in the choice of our Representatives, we are indebted for any invasions our liberties sustain. It is time, therefore, that virtue should shew itself, and however it may blast the thriving hopes of power, yet Princes ought to be overjoyed to have subjects to whom honour is dearer than every thing else.

It is from necessity, therefore, founded in such reasons as neither their honour nor their understanding can overlook, that the numerous Petitioning Counties, Cities, and Towns of England, have taken the alarm, and have stepped forth by applications to Parliament, and by such Constitutional Associations as may give vigour to their Petitions: And we hope, while the cause continues, that the alarm will never cease, but that all will see their interest and their danger undisguised, and come forward till their be one voice throughout the land.

We are persuaded, under circumstances so pressing as the present, that nothing can give effectual redress, to all the evils we feel, but a restoration of the Freedom and Independency of Parliament, by a reform in all those circumstances which are at present the avenues and establishments of a corrupted influence. And nothing can put us in a full possession of that desirable and most necessary event, but a vigorous, compacted, and unshaken union, of all Independent Men throughout the kingdom.

Wherefore we do most anxiously recommend it to all classes of citizens, and especially to those who have votes for the returning of any Members to Parliament, as they value their liberties, the preservation of their remaining properties, and the rescuing of their posterity from unconstitutional dominion, to unite themselves in a firm purpose of obtaining from their Representatives those salutary reforms, (the outlines of which are hereafter submitted) by the establishment whereof, the door must be effectually shut on corruption, and jointly and severally to persevere, regardless of every consideration to the contrary, until they shall have obtained the same.

In the first place then, it must be evident that a Reformation is indispensable in the Civil Establishment, which has grown to such a fund of corruption in an infinity of offices, either useless in their nature, or greatly overpaid in their exercise; in the means it affords for a shameful expenditure in pensions unmerited by services, in the waste committed in the receipt of its monies, and the making up of its accounts. It is impossible, humanly speaking, that while these temptations exist, any Assembly, on whom they are pressed, should be completely free.

In the next place experience hath ever agreed, with the best speculation, that independency in the British House of Commons is most to be looked for in the Representatives of counties. Taking things as they stand at present, there is
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not the probability of a balance, against the influence which now corrupts, without an augmentation of Knights of Shires attentively chosen: And taking things as we hope to find them shortly, when many branches of corruption may be lopped off, such augmentation will give the greatest security to the national interest in the best quarter. Less than one hundred Knights, super-added to the present, will hardly give a number sufficient to secure at present a balance to the independent side; and if the number were left indefinite now, every salutary hope, from this measure, might be defeated.—If ever that hour shall come, when the prudence of the People, uniting with the prepared minds of the Legislature, shall approve of a reduction in the Representations of Boroughs, on such plans as shall silence the prejudices of the interested; the augmentation, now proposed, will no longer be found in the numbers of the House, and till that takes place, necessity, and the only opening of hope, should reconcile the addition, if our first choice might not embrace it.

To these regulations, we conceive an addition must be made for shortening the duration of the sitting Parliament, which can only be done consistently with the Constitution, or with the best policy in an enlarged view, by shortening it to the period of a year: When the two acts, which passed in the reign of Edward the Third, ordained that a Parliament should be holden once every year, and more often if need be; the ob-

ject then evidently being to prevent the Crown from acting without a Parliament, can it be conceived that they did not speak what the Constitution demanded, or that they did not mean a new Parliament every year? The fact is, during the whole of that reign, and for the first eighteen years of the following one, writs were annually issued, and in some instances two or three times in the same year, for new elections, till Richard the Second made himself absolute.

And various were the occasions in those times, when the Commons gave for an answer, to any new propositions of magnitude, that they dared not agree without conference with their countries.

At what period then was it that the consent of the people was asked, and obtained to so momentous a proposal, as that of divesting them of their expected controul over their Representatives? in fact of changing the terms on which the delegation had passed from their hands? Annual Parliaments are therefore the Antient Constitution of England, and the Birth-right of Englishmen.

Nor are they less beneficial in policy than unalienable in right.—In the language of antient times, before the prejudices of habit had thrown false colours over names and things, they were ever described as consistent with the greatest peace, and most peaceably conducted: And in Parliamentary records, for more than two hundred years together, from 49 Henry the Third
till

till 22 Edward the Fourth, we find not so much as one double return, nor more than two or three instances of elections questioned on any ground; a circumstance surely most inviting, when put in contrast with that multitude of perplexing inquiries, which of late years hath consumed so much time, in Committees, to the great hinderance of the national business.—The plain reason is founded not in the time but in the nature of the thing; the duration of the seat was not an object for a violent contest. This will also dispel the objection arising from the probability of tumult and expensiveness; to remove which, it will further contribute not a little, if we would give attention to what passes now among those large Bodies of Electors who annually chuse their corporate offices: But the argument against corruption surmounts every thing else.—Nothing can give so much assurance of defeating it as this limitation.—A seat for three years might induce a man's attention to a bribe.—He that sits but for one, is very unlikely to experience such an offer, or will certainly reject it, if he would not wish to put all his future expectations to an imminent risque.

When once the Constitution of Parliament is improved in these leading points, every thing else, that may appear to have its share in reformation, must be subordinate in its class, and must follow in its time: And the more effectually to ensure these, we entreat you, neither at

the next or any future election, to engage your support, to any Candidate, before you are satisfied that he will give his assistance in Parliament to the establishment of so much of these reforms as may not then be accomplished.

A motion being made, and the question put, it was resolved,

That this Meeting do recommend to the several Committees, to persevere unremittingly in support of the Petitions, and of such measures as tend to reduce the unconstitutional influence of the Crown, and for that purpose to unite themselves in a General Association.

Resolved, That obtaining a law for taking the suffrages of the people, in such a mode as to prevent both expence in elections and the operation of undue influence therein, is necessary towards securing the freedom of Parliament.

Resolved, That it be recommended to our several Committees to adopt the following Propositions, as parts of their general Plan of Union and Association; and to endeavour to obtain the objects of such propositions, by application to and under the authority of Parliament, viz.

Resolved,

1st, That a diligent examination be made into all the branches of the receipt, expenditure, and mode of keeping and passing accounts of public money,

money, in order to obtain the Plan of Reform requested by the Petitions of the People.

Resolved,

2d, That there be sent to the House of Commons, in addition to the present Representatives of Counties, a number of Members not less than one hundred ; to be chosen in a due proportion by the several counties of the kingdom of Great-Britain.

Resolved,

3d, That the Members of the House of Commons be annually elected to serve in Parliament.

Resolved,

4th, That it be most earnestly recommended to the Freeholders of the different counties, and to the Electors of the cities and boroughs, throughout the kingdom, to support, at the ensuing general election, such Candidates to represent them in Parliament as shall, previous to the election, by signing the Association or otherwise, have satisfied them, that they will support the above important regulations in Parliament, or so much thereof as shall not be obtained in the present Parliament.

Resolved,

That the propriety of adopting the following resolution, as greatly tending to accelerate the attainment of the objects of the proposed Plan
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of Political Reformation, be submitted to the respective Committees, viz.

That it be most earnestly recommended to all Members of Parliament, who are friends to the above-mentioned proposed Plan of Reform, to use their utmost endeavours, in this present session of Parliament, to obtain the objects of that Plan.

Resolved, That the above Memorial, formed in this Meeting, be transmitted to the several Committees, as containing Reasons for the Plan of Association proposed by this Meeting, which, we trust, will appear satisfactory to those Committees, and that they may be severally requested to take such effectual measures as to them may seem meet, for making the same public throughout the kingdom.

(Signed)

By order of this Meeting of Deputies,
C. WYVILL, Chairman.

Paper XI.

Paper XI.

*Circular Letter, which accompanied the Report of
the Deputies, assembled in 1780.*

Sir,

I AM directed by the Meeting of Deputies from the Committees of several counties, cities, and towns which have petitioned Parliament for a redress of grievances, adjourned from the St. Alban's Tavern to this place, to transmit to you the enclosed copy of their Resolutions, relative to an intended Plan of General Union and Association, accompanied with a copy of a Memorial containing reasons in justification of those Resolutions, to be reported to the Committee of the
at its next Assembly.

The Deputies trust their Resolutions will be considered, not as offering to the Committee a complete and perfect system of political reformation, but as pointing out some principal objects of constitutional improvement, which, if obtained by the united efforts of the people, will facilitate and secure the establishment of every other regulation which may be necessary to restore the Freedom and Independence of Parliament.

From

From various circumstances, the Deputies apprehend it may be found to be inexpedient in some counties to adopt a Plan of Association so extensive as that traced out by their Resolutions: In that case, as it is the general and received opinion, that shortening the duration of Parliament will be improper, till the æconomical reform, and a more equal representation of the people, have been obtained; the Deputies conceive that the proposition for shortening the duration of Parliament, may be postponed with less inconvenience in the original draught of Association, than any other proposition recommended by this Meeting.

I am also directed by the Meeting of Deputies to represent through you to the Committee, that there is much reason to apprehend Parliament may be dissolved soon after the grant of supplies has received the Royal assent; that it behoves each Committee, therefore, to prepare for that event, by concerting measures effectually to support the interest of those Candidates at the approaching general election, who are known to approve an æconomical reformation, a more equal representation of the people, and shortening the duration of Parliament.

I beg leave further to represent, under the same authority, that the several Committees discountenancing all corrupt and unnecessary expences at any future elections, will thereby promote, in a considerable degree, the freedom
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of election, which must immediately tend to
secure the independence of Parliament.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. It is earnestly requested that no copy of
the inclosed papers may be given, to endanger
their premature appearance in the public prints.

F f APPENDIX

APPENDIX

TO

VOLUME THE FIRST.

*Account of the Debate in the House of Commons
on the 7th of May, 1782, on the Motion of the
Honourable WILLIAM PITT, for a Reform
of Parliament.*

ABOUT four o'clock, the order of the day was called for and Mr. William Pitt rose, and prefaced his intended Motion with an apology for undertaking a task so extensive; and which required abilities and experience so much greater than his; but having said this, he would trust to the indulgence of the House, and believed that the importance of the subject to which he meant to call their attention, would induce them to treat it with the utmost seriousness and respect.—The Representation of the Commons in Parliament was a matter so truly interesting, that it had at all times excited the regard of Men the most enlightened; and

and the defects which they had found in that Representation, had given them reason to apprehend the most alarming consequences to the Constitution. It would be needless for him, in the present moment, to recall the memory of the House to the many occasions upon which he and others, in an anxious struggle with a Ministry, who laboured to exert the corrupt influence of the Crown, in support of an inadequate Representation of the People, maintained the necessity that there was for a calm revision of the principles of the Constitution, and a moderate Reform of such defects as had imperceptibly and gradually stole in to deface, and which threatened at last totally to destroy the most beautiful Fabric of Government in the world. Upon these occasions, they were unsuccessful in their efforts, on account of that corrupt influence of which he had spoken; but at last, he thanked God, the voice of the People had happily prevailed, and we were now blessed with a Ministry, whose wishes went along with those of the People, for a moderate Reform of the errors which had intruded themselves into the Constitution; and he was happy to see that there was a spirit of unanimity prevalent in every part of the Kingdom, and also in every part of that House, which made the present day the fittest for undertaking this great task.—The Ministers had declared their virtuous resolution of supporting

the King's Government by means more honourable as well as more permanent than corruption; and the nation had confidence in the declarations of men who had so invariably proved themselves the Friends of Freedom, and the animated Supporters of an equal and fair System of Representation. That the frame of our Constitution had undergone material alterations, by which the Commons' House of Parliament had received an improper and dangerous bias, and by which indeed, it had fallen so greatly from that direction and effect which it was intended, and ought to have in the Constitution, he believed it would be idle for him to attempt to prove. It was a fact so plain and palpable, that every man's reason, if not his experience, must point it out to him. He had only to examine the quality and nature of that branch of the Constitution as originally established, and compare it with its present state and condition. That beautiful frame of Government which had made us the envy and admiration of mankind, in which the People were intitled to hold so distinguished a share, was so far dwindled and departed from its original purity, as that the Representatives ceased, in a great degree, to be connected with the People. It was the essence of the Constitution, that the People had a share in the Government by the means of Representation; and its excellence and permanency was calculated to
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consist in this Representation, having been designed to be equal, easy, practicable, and complete. When it ceased to be so; when the Representative ceased to have connection with the Constituent, and was either dependent on the Crown or the Aristocracy; there was a defect in the Frame of Representation, and it was not innovation, but recovery of Constitution, to repair it.

He would not, in the present instance, call to their view, or endeavour to discuss the question, whether this species of Reform, or that; whether this suggestion, or that, was the best; and which would most completely tally and square with the original Frame of the Constitution;—It was simply his purpose to move for the institution of an inquiry, composed of such men as the House should, in their wisdom, select as the most proper and best qualified for investigating this subject, and making a report to the House of the best means of carrying into execution a moderate and substantial Reform of the Representation of the People. Though he would not press upon their consideration any proposition whatever, he should still think it his duty to state some facts and circumstances, which in his idea, made this object of Reform essentially necessary. He believed, however, that even this was unnecessary, for there was not a Gentleman in the House, who would not acknowledge, with him, that

Representation, as it now stood, was incomplete. It was perfectly understood, that there were some Boroughs absolutely governed by the Treasury, and others totally possessed by them. It required no experience to say that such Boroughs had no one quality of Representation in them; they had no share nor substance in the general interests of the Country; and they had in fact no stake for which to appoint their Guardians in the popular Assembly. The Influence of the Treasury in some Boroughs was contested, not by the Electors of these Boroughs but by some one or other powerful Man, who assumed or pretended to an Hereditary Property of what ought only to be the rights and privileges of the Electors. The interests of the Treasury were considered as well as the interests of the great Man, the Lord or the Commoner, who had connection with the Borough; but the Interests of the People, the Rights of the Electors, were the only things that never were attended to, nor taken into the account. Would any man say that in this case, there was the most distant idea or principle of Representation? There were other Boroughs which had now in fact no actual existence, but in the return of Members to the House. They had no existence in property, in population, in trade, in weight. There were hardly any men in the Borough who had a right to vote; and they were the slaves and subjects

subjects of a Person who claimed the property of the Borough, and who in fact made the return. This also was no Representation, nor any thing like it. Another set of Boroughs and Towns in the lofty possession of English Freedom, claimed to themselves the right of bringing their Votes to market. They had no other market, no other property, and no other stake in the Country, than the property and price which they procured for their Votes.— Such Boroughs were the most dangerous of all others. So far from consulting the interests of their Country in the choice which they made, they held out their Borough to the best purchaser, and in fact, they belonged more to the Nabob of Arcot than they did to the People of Great-Britain. They were Cities and Boroughs more within the jurisdiction of the Carnatic, than the limits of the Empire of Great-Britain; and it was a fact pretty well known and generally understood, that the Nabob of Arcot had no less than seven or eight Members in that House. Such Boroughs, then, were sources of corruption, they gave rise to an inundation of corrupt Wealth, and corrupt Members, who had no regard nor connection, either for or with the People of this Kingdom. It had always been considered, in all nations, as the greatest source of danger to a kingdom when foreign influence was suffered to creep into the National Councils, the fact

was clear, that the influence of the Nabobs of India was great; why then might not their imaginations point out to them another most probable circumstance that might occur, the danger of which would be evident, as soon as mentioned. Might not a Foreign State in enmity with this Country, by means of these Boroughs, procure a party of men to act for them under the mask and character of Members of that House?

Such a cabal was more to be dreaded than any other; and this, among other domestic evils, was to be apprehended from the present incomplete and improper Frame of Representation. How many other circumstances were there, under which the various descriptions of Boroughs in this Kingdom were influenced, and seduced from their real and direct duty? Having mentioned these facts by which experience came in aid of reason, to convince him of the inadequacy of Representation, he conceived it would be perfectly needless for him to enter into any argument to prove the necessity that there was for a Reform in this particular. He was convinced that every Gentleman would acknowledge the truth of the fact, however they might differ about the means of accomplishing it; or about the delicacy with which they ought to meddle in any shape with the Constitution. He begged leave to say, that there was not a man in that House who had

had more reverence for the Constitution, and more respect, even for its vestiges, than himself. But he was afraid that the reverence and the enthusiasm which Englishmen entertained for the Constitution, would, if not suddenly prevented, be the means of destroying it; for such was their enthusiasm, that they would not even remove its defects, for fear of touching its beauty. He admired the one so much, so great was his reverence for the beauties of that Constitution, that he wished to remove those defects, as he clearly perceived that they were defects which altered the radical principles of the Constitution, and it would not be innovation, as he had said, but recovery of Constitution, to remove them; Gentlemen were ready to acknowledge the truth of this; but they stopped, from the difficulty of accomplishing the necessary Reform. Many Propositions had been made from different quarters, towards this great national object. In particular it had been said, that the purity and independence of Parliament would be most easily accomplished, and the most effectually, by annihilating the corrupt influence of the Crown. This he was ready to acknowledge as a great and powerful means of restoring independence and respect to Parliament, and he was happy to see, that under the present Ministry the corrupt influence of the Crown would not be exerted. It might therefore
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with truth be said, that now the injurious, corrupt, and baneful influence of the Crown was no more. Its effect would not be felt during the Ministry of a set of men who were the Friends of Constitutional Freedom; but it was the duty of Parliament to provide for the future, and to take care that in no time this secret and dark system should be revived, to contaminate the fair and honourable Fabric of our Government. This influence was of the most pernicious kind; and at all times had been pointed to as the fertile source of all our miseries. It had been substituted in the room of wisdom, of activity, of exertion, and of success. It was but too naturally connected with the extensive limits of our Empire, and with the broad and great scale upon which its operations were conducted. It had been truly said of this corrupt influence, "That it had grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength."—Unhappily, however, for this Country, it had not decayed with our decay, nor diminished with our decrease. It bore no sympathy nor connection with our falling State; but even under that Ministry, who, by their mad impolicy, had contracted the limits of the Empire, this corrupt influence was still found to exist in all its strength, and had supported the Ministry for a length of years, against all the consequences of their mischievous system, and a desolated Empire. He thanked Heaven that

that we had now a Ministry, who placed their dependence on a more honourable basis, and who conceived nothing to be more necessary or essential to the permanent interests of their Country, than the total overthrow and extinction of this influence.

It had been thought by some, that the best means of effecting a more near relation between the Representatives and the People, was to take from the decayed and corrupt Boroughs a part of their Members, and add them to those places which had more interest and stake in the Country. Another mode of making the connection between the Representative and Constituent more lively and intimate, was to bring the former more frequently before the Electors, by shortening the duration of Parliament.— But all these propositions he would beg leave, for the present, to omit entirely, and to deliver the matter to the Committee to be chosen free from all suggestions whatever, that they might exercise their own judgment, and collect, from the lights which they would receive, full and complete information on the subject. He would therefore content himself with saying, that having mentioned the manner in which he would take the liberty of proposing to institute this inquiry, he hoped that he should be forgiven for taking up this important business.— The matter of complaint was clear to him; and he was strengthened in his opinion from the

the advice of some of the first and greatest characters in the kingdom. The assistance which he had received, he acknowledged with gratitude, as it fortified his mind in regard to the opinions which he had formed on the subject. It was also the opinion of many respectable characters now no more, and particularly of one, of whom every Member in the House could speak with more freedom than himself. That person was not apt to indulge vague and chimerical speculations, inconsistent with practice and expediency. He personally knew, that it was the opinion of this person, that without recurring to first principles in this respect, and establishing a more solid and equal Representation of the People, by which the proper constitutional connection should be revived, this Nation, with the best capacities for grandeur and happiness of any on the face of the earth, must be confounded with the mass of those whose liberties were lost, in the corruption of the People. With regard to the time at which he had brought it on, he was convinced that it was the most proper and seasonable moment that could be imagined.— If it had been brought forward during an eager opposition to the measures of Government, it might have been considered as the object of spite, or peevishness; and if under such circumstances they had prevailed, it would have been said to be carried by assault. But now
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there was no division of sentiments. His Majesty's Ministers respected the voice of the People, and were anxiously bent on the Reformation of Parliament. If there was any division of opinion at all, it was about the means of accomplishing the object. He concluded with moving, "That a Committee be appointed to enquire into the State of the Representation in Parliament, and to report to the House their observations thereon."

Mr. Alderman Sawbridge seconded the motion; and he did it he said with particular satisfaction, because he thought it the only method that Parliament could pursue for restoring this Country to its rank and estimation. He had himself the intention of moving the question: but hearing it was the design of the Honourable Gentleman to urge it, from whom it would come with so much more weight and consequence, he had cheerfully given up his purpose, and had heard the Honourable Gentleman open the business with that great and astonishing ability for which he was so justly distinguished. He earnestly recommended this important matter to the House, and hoped and trusted that it would receive their general consent.

Mr. Powis rose, he said to give his hearty negative to the question, from a thorough conviction, that so far from its being of real service it would be attended with infinite mischief:
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the Constitution, in its present form, had stood the test of many ages, and had been the envy of all the World; he could not see any good purpose the present motion would answer—for it would not assist Government in a ship, a man, or a guinea, towards carrying on the War with vigour, or towards establishing that much wished for object, Peace.

Mr. T. Pitt, delivered his sentiments on the question to the following effect:—I rise under a degree of pain and embarrassment upon the present question, that I never experienced upon any other occasion since I have had the honour to have a seat in this House. The peculiarities of my situation here, at the same time they draw every eye upon me in a question of this nature, lay me under such difficulties, that they scarcely allow me the liberty of delivering an honest and sincere opinion upon a matter at once of so much delicacy and importance. I am conscious of the obvious interpretation that every word will bear from my mouth, where my opinion coincides with an evident and palpable interest. Would to God, Sir, that at this moment my interest and opinion were in opposite scales, that I might find credit with those who hear me, in delivering the genuine sentiments of my heart upon a subject upon which I should think it criminal to conceal them.

Believe me, Sir, I feel also not only the disadvantage under which I rise to oppose a popular

pular opinion so ably supported, but that it is with extreme reluctance I can bring myself to oppose a Proposition introduced to you by my worthy Friend and near relation, whose zeal upon this occasion, as upon all others, bears testimony to that ardour which animates him in the cause of Freedom, and to that blood, which warms the feelings of his heart with every pure and disinterested affection towards his Country; yet, Sir, nor the admiration of his virtues and talents, nor sentiments of kindness and consanguinity, nor a regard to the interpretation that may be put upon my conduct, shall upon so great an occasion deter me from my duty: no, Sir, I will use the freedom which a seat in this House allows me, as long as I am permitted to have a seat in it; I will deliver my sentiments honestly, boldly, and faithfully; I will warn you of a danger that is opening upon you of the most alarming nature, and which in my opinion, leads directly to such mischief and confusion as it will not be in the power of any human effort to remedy. Sir, may I be permitted to say, I disapprove of the Proposition, of the mode, and of the moment it is offered to you. I disapprove of the Proposition because it leads to a principle I never can admit of, a principle of equal Representation. I see my worthy Friend disclaims such a principle: I will shew him in an instant, by considering the

the mode, that it leads to nothing else. Considering the Proposition as leading to that principle, I disapprove of it as totally inapplicable to the British Constitution, I disapprove of the mode, because I consider a Committee of the sort proposed by my Honourable Friend, confining itself to no specific Proposition, nay, to no line or principle whatsoever, as tending to no purpose but to hold out visionary hopes to visionary men, which it is utterly impossible to satisfy, and which, ending in disappointment to the expectation of the Public, can produce no consequence but to inflame their passions, and disseminate discontent over the Kingdom. Now, Sir, as to the moment, allow me to say, it appears to me ill chosen upon many accounts. There are at this time wild and extravagant ideas in the Public, with regard to the Representation, which I hope time and reflection will expose in their true light; but till that spirit shall have subsided, it is little likely that any sober, practical judicious scheme of regulation in this particular can be attended with those satisfactory consequences we might wish. Our attention at this important crisis is distracted amongst a variety of objects, many of them essential to our immediate existence as a State; many of them tending to such Reforms, as may promise to us either œconomy in Administration of our Finances, or stability
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to our happy Constitution. For God's sake, let us not embrace so many objects at a time, that it is impossible to give to any one of them that degree of attention so necessary to render it adequate to its purpose. Reformation, if it is wise and effectual, must be gradual in its progress: let us see the effect of what we have already undertaken before we proceed farther. Every innovation is an experiment; and it would be the completest rashness to hurry one project upon another hastily, inconsiderately, till the minds of men are alarmed with apprehensions that nothing will be left quiet in the Kingdom.

Having said thus much, Sir, let me examine for a moment what is the clamour against the present State of the Representation; in what it is supposed to have departed so widely from its first principle; and in what that defect consists which is supposed to cry so loudly for Reformation. Theorists, it seems, have endeavoured to establish as a maxim, that that nation only can be free where no individual in it is governed but by laws to which he has given his assent in person, or by the mouth of one he has personally deputed to give that assent for him: Freedom, therefore, is stated to consist in equal personal Representation. Good God, Sir, is that the principle upon which the House has been established by our ancestors? Can any such principle be applied to our Constitution?

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Equal

Equal Representation, Sir, when out of a mass of six or seven millions of inhabitants, not perhaps three hundred thousand have been trusted with the privilege of voting for Representatives! What has been the history of Parliament, at least, the history of the House of Commons? The first writs, if I mistake not, in the Reign of Henry III. summoned to Parliament none but Knights of the Shire; they were considered as a complete Representation of the People. But how was their equality adjusted? By assigning the same number of Representatives to the County of Rutland, as to the Counties of Devon, Somerset, Lincoln, and York. Is there scarcely a greater inequality to be stated in the present Representation? To those, Sir, which I have ever thought to be the true Representatives of the People at large, were added the great Cities, and by degrees large Towns, Places of Note, and even inconsiderable Villages. By what rule they were added is difficult to say; certainly not by any rule of equal Representation, or the uniform importance of the Places that were honoured with this privilege. The prerogative was held at that time competent to grant such privileges, as it granted the privileges of Corporations and Immunities as it thought expedient; and such beneficial or honorary privileges have ever been held among the most sacred Rights that we possess. Is it fit, is it expedient, Sir, to try these chartered privileges,

leges, at this time of day, by a new rule that never did apply to them? Alas, Sir, if I have any interest in the question, do with it as you please; God forbid any interest of mine, however dear, however valuable, should stand one moment in the way of the public welfare and prosperity! It is of little moment whether I or my posterity have the means continued to us of troubling you in this House; I have never presumed to state a personal privilege to be so sacred as that it ought not to give way to the consideration of the Public. I am persuaded, on the other hand, the Legislature will never lightly be induced to trample upon ancient and valuable Rights, upon fanciful grounds of theory and speculation. Equal Representation, Sir, as an essential principle of free Government—did I say only, that it never has applied to the Constitution of this Government? Shew me the Country upon the globe where such a principle ever did apply. Plausible and popular as such an idea may now be, it is of all extravagant ideas, the most extravagant, the most impracticable, the most visionary and absurd. If it be essential to a free Government, there never has been a free Government since men were united in society, and there never can be one as long as the world endures.

But, Sir, if the slightest recollection obliges us to abandon this strange principle, what other shall we substitute in its room as the principle

of the British Parliament? Let us for a moment reflect upon the origin and purpose of its institution, and we shall not be at a loss for its real principles. What, Sir, is the purpose of Parliament, but a balance against the power of the Crown? There, Sir, is your true principle; without entering into nice discussions, and theoretical systems, fitter at all times for Philosophers than Statesmen; let us see whether the end be answered of our institution. Theory and practice are perpetually at variance; let us be guided by our experience of what exists, not by the hypothetical arguments of what should probably be the case. If, for example, Sir, my conduct, since I have had the honour of a seat in this House, has been marked with something so peculiarly servile and abject, that it should necessarily induce you to imagine that the tenure by which I obtain that seat is under the immediate influence of the Crown, I ought to be the immediate object of your Reformation. To that object, if Reformation must take place, to that object direct your attention, and you will indeed recur to the first principle of your institution. No, Sir; the Members of this House, however variously elected, stand individually and collectively as the Representatives of all the subjects under your dominions. If they answer the great purpose of defending the People at large from the encroachments of Power, and the increasing influence of the Crown;
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if we hold the purses of the People, as faithful guardians; if we preserve the Laws of the Country from violation, we answer every purpose of our intention, whatever irregularities a speculatist may think he discovers in our institution; for that Country enjoys the benefit of Civil Liberty, where the Laws of the Land hold an equal course to all, not where all are equally represented. Wherever the Law can be dispensed with, and altered at the arbitrary pleasure of the individual, let the Representation be what it will, such a Country is, in that degree, subject to arbitrary power.

Having then, Sir, endeavoured to establish what I think the true and only principle of the British Parliament, that it is a balance against the influence of the Crown, (and thinking so, the encroachments of that influence shall ever be the object of my jealousy, whilst I have a Vote allowed me in this House) let me go one step farther; I am sensible I am going to tread upon delicate ground; there are arguments that can rather by a hint be brought home to your own experience, than explained and dilated upon by me. Is all influence upon this House equally dangerous, equally alarming, equally subversive of the great principle I have established? I have heard, upon other occasions, that there are influences of individuals more obnoxious to the freedom of this House, than even the influence of the Crown. Let us take

heed, Sir, in what we are doing, when we wish to remove all influence from among us. We cannot too often be reminded of the difference between theory and practice: what was the contest with the Crown before the institution of this House? I will not call it a contest for Liberty; it was a contest for Power only between the King, the Barons, and the Clergy. What, Sir, has been the change that since its first origin has thrown weight into the balance of this House? What, Sir, but the weight of property, (I will speak out, for I am not to be discouraged by hard words, or misrepresentations that may render me unpopular without doors) I will say, the aristocratical weight of property, which, increasing in this House, has enabled it to stand against the influence of the Crown. The circumstances under which the other House exists at present perhaps it would not be decent in me minutely to describe; let me only say, that such a counterpoise would hardly be thought sufficient to rely upon; the Barons are no longer the barrier against the encroachments of the Crown. Let us take care, that by innovation purely democratical, and which shall remove from us that influence to which we owe so much of our importance, we do not reduce ourselves back again to that state, when the great influence of all may crush us under its feet.

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To revert, Sir, to the words of the motion upon your paper, they put this House, in my opinion, under a very cruel dilemma. If you give a negative to the proposed Committee, the prejudice of the times will not fail to represent us as partial, prejudiced, and corrupt; shutting our ears even to the examination of those evils which they are taught to believe to be so fatal to their liberties, for fear we should be obliged to confess the necessity of a remedy. By this means, the confidence of the People, so peculiarly essential to us at this time, may be in some measure withdrawn from us to the great detriment of the Public, and the danger of the common weal. Should we receive the Proposition, we should launch into a sea that has no shore; it is a general enquiry, without any thing defined or specific as its object; it opens an inquisition into the state of every Borough; it alarms the feelings of every one who has an interest in so extensive a consideration, whilst it holds out to the Public an expectation which you neither mean to satisfy, nor ought to satisfy, nor could satisfy, if it were never so expedient. Had my worthy Friend, the mover of this question, done me the honour to consult me previously upon his first intention, I would have deprecated such a measure by every argument I could have urged to him. Were it possible I could now flatter myself that I could dissuade him from persisting in it, I should

appeal to every feeling in his bosom; I see it would be in vain; my worthy Friend has his opinion formed, and is determined to abide by it: be it so; I can only lament it, and acquiesce under the necessity it imposes upon this House. Let us consider then upon what we are going to decide upon the present question. It is not whether any one specific alteration in the Representation, or rather any one instance of the Representation would be for the better or the worse; it is whether we shall think it expedient to open a general shop to receive all the projects of the wildest of the projectors; to let loose the imaginations of the Public upon the most delicate, and at the same time the most important consideration. Gentlemen may flatter themselves they can set bounds to these enquiries as they please, and be masters of the torrent they are going to let in upon us; that when they admit the principle of equal Representation, which they feel impracticable in its full force, they can restrain its operations to the degree they shall think proper. They are mistaken; the principle must be carried through or it must be abandoned. If it is true, if it admits an inherent right in every individual, who is free only in as much as he possesses it, what right have you to make exceptions? what argument will you expect to satisfy the infinite majority you must by the strongest of all urgencies, by absolute necessity, and the nature of things, deprive of it? If it is a natural right, all have the right or none; there is no medium.

dium. Far be it from me to say, that there are no defects that can be remedied in the present State of Representation. Shew me the specific Proposition, that does not involve me in so dangerous, and I will say, as far as relates to this Constitution, so new a principle, and I will lend to it my most serious attention. I will reject it, if upon mature deliberation it appears to me inexpedient; I will embrace it with an honest zeal, if I think it tends to the dignity, honour, and independence of Parliament, without the mischiefs that attend rash and ill-digested innovations. Such Propositions I do not despair to see before you at a fit time; but in the present moment, to countenance so general, so undefined a measure as that upon your table, would be, in my poor judgement, such an act of madness and infatuation, as could tend to nothing but tumult and disorder, and every confusion that expectation, followed by disappointment, could operate upon the passions of the multitude.

Mr. M'Donald confessed himself against the motion, and owned, that as the present Form of the Constitution had stood from Charles the Second's time, without any material alteration, he could see no reason for any amendment to it at the present; he contended, that every part of the Kingdom was represented, and instanced, that in other Countries respect was not always paid to the number of the inhabitants, yet no complaints were made; witness Holland, where Amsterdam sent no more Delegates than the

the smallest Province, yet no complaint was made of any unfair Representation.

Sir George Savile, after having complimented Mr. W. Pitt on the eloquence of his speech, and added a fervent prayer, that Providence would put it into his heart, ever to make a generous and benevolent use of the distinguished talents it had intrusted to him, acknowledged himself a firm friend to the motion, and declared that it was his opinion that the House might as well call itself the Representative of France, as of the People of England, for the measures of the late Ministry had certainly received the sanction of that House, although they had universally been reprobated by the Country at large. He had a large oak, he said, growing some time since on his estate, which bore many green leaves on the trunk of it, and seemed to be in a flourishing state; but on looking at the tree there appeared a hole or two, which he looked farther into, and on a close inspection he found the tree was rotten within; the inside was mere touchwood. He had the rotten part dug out, and now the tree formed a commodious place fit for a dozen persons to dine in. He compared the present Constitution to that venerable old oak; it appeared sound, but on inspection he feared it would be found like the tree, rotten at the heart. In one respect, however, the comparison failed, and it was well it did so; for when in the natural course of vegetation, the oak had become unsound, no skill could

could restore the aged tree to a sound and healthy state; neither amputation nor engrafting could stop its progress in decay; or prevent its dissolution. But it was otherwise with the Constitution; when age or accidental disorder threatened to destroy it, such means, seasonably applied, might be successful; they might restore its decaying frame to the health and vigour of its soundest state.—But that the salutary means alluded to, would be timely applied, he was by no means confident. When he looked forward to the probable events of future time, the prospect gave him no satisfaction.

However the world might reprobate him, he could not, he said, help confessing that no good news of late years had given him any degree of pleasure; it was to him, like victuals to a sick man, it palled his appetite, for he plainly saw that nothing but distress could bring about a Reformation, nothing but distress of the utmost horror could open the eyes of the People; it was well for this Country if their eyes should not be opened too late.

Sir Horace Mann confessed that he thought the question rather premature; there undoubtedly was room for a Reform, but now was not the proper time: he had a large landed property he said, contiguous to the Town he represented, yet he did not wish that landed property should have the sole Representation of the People; there were other properties which ought to be considered, but as he thought the
present

present motion would not lead to that desired end, he should move the order of the day, as a means of getting rid of the present question.

The Earl of Surry confessed himself a warm advocate for the motion, as first moved, and hoped the House would set about it, with a good will, as great utility might be expected now we had a Ministry who were Friends to the People, and we were not in the same predicament now as when a Reform was set about in the 15th century; then we had religious controversies; but now, thank God, there was nothing of the kind.

Mr. Byng said, he rose with the greatest pleasure to give a hearty assent to a Committee being appointed for the purpose proposed: the County he had the honour to sit for, was so shamefully represented, in point of number, that he frequently was at a loss to get a quorum of its Members to do any business, although it was the County in which the very House of Parliament stood; a regulation was necessary, he said, and he should be happy to give every support to a measure of the kind; the tree was rotten, and it was proper either to lop off the branches or strike at the root.

Mr. Rolle declared himself against the motion, and insinuated, that the Hon. Gentleman, Mr. Pitt, had been pressed into the service; he was certain, he said, that the Country did not complain of the present Representation, but

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it had been set on foot by a set of speculative Men, who had, in Associations and Meetings of that kind, stirred the People up to ask for something which they never before thought of.

Sir Charles Turner said, he never should mince matters, whenever he thought the liberty of the subject was in danger; he considered the House of Commons at present, as a parcel of thieves that had stolen an estate, and were afraid of letting any person look into the title deeds, through fear of losing it again. That the House of Commons at present were not the Representatives of the People was plain, for they had carried on the cursed American War, notwithstanding the voice of the People was so much against it; and the Honourable Baronet who had moved the order of the day, should have recollected that the Cinque Ports returned their Members to Parliament by the voice of the Revenue Officers; he believed, he said, the present Ministry were honest than the last, but that was no reason for him to be quiet, he wanted the Constitution to be in such a situation, that no Ministry, however bad, could for the future make use of it against the subject; it was a good thing, he said, to have a good King, but we ought to guard against a bad one. He had in his infancy sucked the milk of patriotism, and he was confident some of that milk still remained in him, and would come forth on all occasions of this kind. He was himself

himself a Member for the City of York, and he was confident the whole County was for a fair and equal Representation, and if it was not adopted by the House, the People would themselves insist upon it.

Mr. Courtenay, in a speech of considerable length, full of severe satire, kept the House in a continual roar of laughter; he confessed himself a warm friend to the motion, from a thorough conviction that a regulation was extremely necessary; he read a passage from Locke, highly in favour of the regulation, and put a simile to the House: supposing, that he had an old mansion which had run to decay by the neglect of the Steward, the upper part destroyed by nests of daws, and the lower part undermined with rats, what would be necessary in that business? why, certainly, to pull the mansion down, and erect a new building in its stead; but he made no doubt People would say, what, destroy that old fabric, that place that was the admiration of your ancestors? No, do not touch it. He would answer yes, I am determined to make the estate as valuable as possible.

Mr. Secretary Fox said, he rose with pleasure to speak on a topic in which the rights of the People, and the freedom of the subject, were so materially concerned; it was always contended, he said, that the People of England were virtually represented, and it had been carried farther;

farther; some persons had formerly said, that the People of America were in fact as much represented as the People of Birmingham; though he was free to confess, that by the present House of Commons the People were virtually represented; yet a virtual Representation was only a mere succedaneum for an equal Representation, and Gentlemen who were so strenuous for the support of the present Constitution, frequently made use of the franchise granted to Freeholders by Henry the Sixth, in various ways as best suited their purpose. If they would only recollect, a Freeholder of forty shillings in those days was a man of great estate; to exclude every man now from voting who had not an estate equal to forty shillings in those times, would be excluding the greatest part of the present Freeholders. That the voice of the People was not to be collected from the votes of that House was plain, for in all the great questions for the welfare of the Country, he had observed that the County Members, which were most likely to be independent, had uniformly voted, in a proportion of five sixths for the question, but had been overpowered by the Members for the rotten Boroughs, which totally defeated every good end that could be proposed. The Duke of Richmond, he said, had last year introduced a bill into the other House of Parliament for an equal Representation; he could not, he owned, subscribe
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to all the parts of it, but he was convinced that the Noble Peer meant it for the public good, for he was not ashamed to confess that he looked upon him as the most able and fit man to bring about a Reform of any this Country could boast of. It had been said, that to add Members to the Counties would be encreasing the Aristocratic influence; he owned it would; and in some measure he confessed himself a friend to that doctrine; but he would wish to be understood at the same time not to mean the influence of Peers, but to consider the monied interest as the Aristocratic part; men who had stakes to lose ought, and he trusted would be the most anxious, to preserve them; it had been suggested to him, that the army and navy ought to be excluded that House; he was of quite a different opinion; for he could wish in order to make that House perfect, that it should contain the landed, the navy, the army, the monied, and in short every interest; but it did not at present; and the City for which he had the honour to sit was so little represented, that the County in which it stood, although it contained one-eighth part of the whole number of Electors of Great-Britain, although it paid one-sixth part of the Land-Tax, and a full third of all other taxes, yet it had not more than a fifty-fifth part of the Representation. Certainly no man in that House could in justice contend, that the County
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of Middlesex was fairly represented; for if they did, he must differ from them materially. He paid a variety of compliments to Mr. W. Pitt, for his steady attachment to liberty, and declared that he found nothing but the most imminent danger would ever awaken the People to a sense of their danger; he reprobated the ruinous measures of the late Ministry, and declared that he wished for no other support than what would naturally come from a thorough conviction that his measures were right.

Mr. Thomas Pitt said in explanation, that he had not opposed going into the Committee because there were a variety of opinions concerning the State of the Representation, but because it would tend to countenance an extravagant and impracticable opinion that was got abroad, viz. That the defect in our Constitution was the unequal Representation, and would therefore raise those expectations it would not satisfy; whilst specific Propositions involved in them no principle but their own. He admitted that he had heard the Mover in his opening disclaim the principle of equal Representation in its extent, but that it was to him the same thing in its degree; the one was impracticable, the other partial and unjust. He disclaimed the meaning Mr. Fox had put upon his definition of Civil Liberty, where the Law was equal to all and not *ad arbitrium cujuscunque*, which he took to be the definition of arbitrary power. But he said he was far from supposing it a

matter of indifference under what form of Government such a system of Civil Liberty were to be maintained. On the contrary, that its existence depended solely upon the degree of Political Liberty, in the form of Government, without which it could scarce subsist an hour.

He explained also, that so far from being an enemy to any Reform in the Representation, if it came in the shape of a specific Proposition, there was one that he confessed himself extremely partial to, viz. That which he heard Lord Chatham state formerly to the House of Lords; the adding one more Knight of the Shire to each County in England, without interfering with the present Representation in Boroughs, &c. This, he said, was the conclusion that patriot had formed from his experience and reflection at an advanced period of life, and which he himself cordially adopted as thinking it would add new vigour to the Representation without the inconveniences of innovation.

Mr. Powis and Sir G. Savile rose to explain; after which

The Lord Advocate declared himself an enemy to the motion, from a certainty that it could produce no good. The Constitution, he said, had existed for ages pure, and it was not a proper time now to think of altering it. He had not observed, he said, on searching the journals, that Lord Chatham had ever brought in any Reform whatever; that great statesman
plainly

plainly saw the Constitution wanted no such alteration, for he had found it sufficient to bring us to the highest pinnacle of glory, and he was confident it still was perfectly pure to carry us through, provided the present set of men at the head of affairs exerted those great abilities which we are certain they possessed.— He declared that he would not pledge himself to support Ministers in any one particular motion, but he would attend day by day, and give them every support in his power, to measures he thought for the public good. He begged the Right Hon. Secretary to court unanimity in that House. The learned Lord endeavoured to ridicule the arguments of others, and declared, that if any part of the Representation wanted a Reform, it was that of the place from whence he came (Scotland).

Mr. Secretary Fox answered the learned Lord respecting unanimity; he declared that he and his Colleagues were determined to act on measures for the public good; and he should never seek unfair means to gain support, but should trust to chance, from a thorough conviction that the People would in the end assert their own rights, and what Parliament refused to grant, they might probably insist on.

Mr. Dempster said, that if the argument which had been alledged, that without mentioning the specific mode of obtaining the redress, the House ought not to send the subject to a Committee, had been admitted, in other

cases the Nation would have lost the benefits of the most substantial Reform in more than one instance. In the case of the East-India Inquiries, there was no specific mode pointed out first in the House, and upon that sent to the Committee; but it was merely declared that there were abuses which ought to be inquired into—the Committee had inquired, and upon their report it was most likely that regulations would take place of the most important nature; and by the operation of which this Country would reap all the advantages of a happy commercial system in their Asiatic Territories.—The House ought to do in this matter exactly in the same way; they ought to leave to the Committee the whole business, and act upon their report. He was well convinced that there were abuses that ought to be remedied. In the part of the Country to which he had the honour to belong, where the forms of Election were different from those in the other parts of Britain, there were several peculiarities of a most inconvenient and improper nature.—He would mention one in particular, the case of superiority: He was himself the superior of a land, with which he had no other connection, he neither lived upon it, nor received the rents; it was the property of another person, but he as superior had a vote, and the Proprietor had none, though in every respect entitled, except by the forms of a local mode of tenure, to the rights of a Freeholder.

Mr.

Mr. Sheridan spoke much in favour of the motion and answered the learned Lord in every argument he had adduced. He took up the families of Sir George Savile and Mr. Courtenay, in a beautiful manner, and plainly shewed the necessity of an inquiry being appointed.

Colonel Murray was averse from altering the Constitution in any respect. It had endured for ages, and if there were any errors, which he was ready to admit there were, they were owing to the Members themselves. If Members were honest, the Constitution was not in fault.

Mr. Rosewarne also opposed the motion upon the same grounds; he was an enemy to innovations, by which the old fabric of the Constitution was to be shaken. It had stood the test of ages, and their most honourable conduct would be to hand it down, as pure as they had received it, to their posterity.

Mr. Alderman Townsend was strongly and clearly of opinion, that there must be a Reform in the Constitution, for that House was not in its present frame the Representative of the People.

He wondered exceedingly that the opposition to this measure should have been begun by a Gentleman (Mr. T. Pitt) who was himself the Representative of a Borough, which, in fact, had not a single Elector. The return was made by some person, no creature knew who, and yet this Gentleman came, and was to be considered

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as one of the Representatives of the People of England. He was no such thing. He was his own Representative, and nothing else. Would any man say that this was very consistent with any radical principle of the Constitution? Or that while this existed, we could truly say, that there was an equal or fair Representation of the People?

Mr. Rigby expressed himself very much against these innovations, which were merely chimerical, and which could never be reduced to any solid and substantial practice. He was an enemy to the present Reform, because in fact, it had not arisen from any request made to that House by the People. It had come from Associations which were by no means expressive of the sense of the Counties to which they belonged; these Associations were formed in this manner: A set of men determined to call a Meeting of the County to which they belonged; at this Meeting all persons were excluded who were not of their own way of thinking. From these persons thus assembled Delegates were chosen, and these Delegates made Resolutions and published them in the newspapers, as the sense of their County. This was not the way of collecting the voice of the People: it might be asked then how the voice of the People was to be collected? Could it be so by the Sheriff of the several Counties calling together the Grand Juries? No; for the Sheriff might call only such Gentlemen as he knew to be of the particular

particular sentiments which he wished them to express. This then was not the way of collecting the sense of the People, it could not be collected but in that House; and he believed that the sense of the People if it really could be collected, would be against the motion. He should wish, before he consented to have consulted his Constituents.

Sir Watkin Lewes said the Metropolis, London and Westminster, was computed to consist of an eighth part of the People of this island, and pay one-fifth to the land-tax, and a full third to all other taxes, (as mentioned by the Right Hon. Secretary Fox) and yet had but eight Members, of which he had the honour to be one. Their property was disposed of by persons who bore no share of the burthen.—The present Electors (not to mention those who ought to have a share in the Election of their Representatives) consisted of a greater number than returns a majority of that House. An Honourable Gentleman (Mr. T. Pitt) had said he should oppose the motion, because if the motion passed, the People were to be consulted. Such an argument coming from one of their Representatives, he could not help expressing his surprise at! and particularly as it so materially concerned the regulations of their Representation in that House. The last Honourable Gentleman had said, he should oppose the motion, because he should wish previously to consult his Constituents. The motion
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went only to the appointment of a Committee, who were to digest some specific Resolutions or Plans, which were intended to be published, and not agreed on till the Hon. Gentleman would have an opportunity of consulting his Constituents; and he appealed to the Hon. Gentleman if it would not be better to advise, and consult with them, when he had some well-digested Plan, or specific Resolution to take their opinion upon. Sir Watkin observed, he could not agree in the definition given by an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. Pitt) of Civil Liberty, which in Sir Watkin's opinion, was more or less perfect in proportion to the share the People had in the Government, and that Civil Liberty could not exist without Political Liberty. It appeared to him to be a solecism in politics, that the Representation should continue, when the objects of Representation have ceased, and are no longer in existence, which was the case of the Hon. Gentleman who opposed the motion.

Mr. W. Pitt concluded the debate with a most animated and eloquent speech, in which he reviewed all the objections that had been thrown out to his motion.

The Speaker then put the question, as moved by Sir Horace Mann, "That the order of the day be now read," upon which the House divided, ayes 161; noes 141;—majority against Mr. Pitt's motion 20.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.

